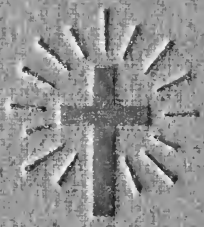
The Radiant Life of Vera B. Blinn



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May you be a channel
of blessing.

Mr. & Mrs. J. E. Foutch
May 7, 1921

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Vera B. Blinn

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THE RADIANT LIFE
OF
VERA B. BLINN

BY
MRS. J. HAL SMITH

Mrs. J. Hal Smith

1921
THE OTTERBEIN PRESS
W. R. Funk, Agent
DAYTON, OHIO

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I
Childhood 7

CHAPTER II
High School and College Days 17

CHAPTER III
A Young Teacher in York College 35

CHAPTER IV
Widening Spheres of Service 43

CHAPTER V
A High School Teacher 59

CHAPTER VI
Editor of The Evangel 73

CHAPTER VII
General Secretary of the Women's Missionary Association 87

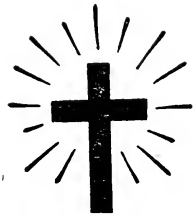
CHAPTER VIII
Her Crowning 97

ADDRESS
Calling out Recruits 113

ADDRESS
The Untouched Cross 125

EXTRACT OF ADDRESS
"In Christ" 133

Favorite Poems of Vera Blinn 136



"One life to be lived and only one,
And not what we measure, but what we give,
Is the measure with God of the life we live,
And of work that is bravely done."

"An angel paused in his onward flight,
With a seed of love, and truth, and right,
And said, 'O where can this seed be sown
Where 'twill yield most fruit when fully grown?'
The Savior heard and said, as He smiled,
'Place it at once in the heart of a child.'"

CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD

VERA BELLE BLINN was born in Penalosa, an obscure town in Kansas, on Lincoln's birthday, February 12, 1890. Two great blessings were hers upon her advent into the world: a Christian home and a warm welcome for the baby. She herself would perhaps wish us to add a third—she was born in Kansas, the State she loved best. Both parents were of strong religious convictions and earnest workers in their local church. Her father kept the general store at Penalosa. Up till this time there was only one child in the family, a daughter, Bertha, then sixteen years of age. All her life Bertha had wanted a baby in the home. There was an orphanage in a neighboring city which she called the "poor house," and over and over again she had begged her parents to go to the "poor house" and get a baby. The only satisfaction she ever received was her father's joking remark that it was likely they would all need to go to the poor house before long.

One year Bertha went away to Kingman, Kansas, to attend high school. While there she received a telegram one morning calling her home. Something

which she read between the lines awakened eager expectations and sent the blood racing through her veins. In her haste to be home she could not wait for the eleven o'clock passenger train, so took the nine o'clock freight for Penalosa. Three days later, amid a bewilderment of joy, she held in her arms a daintily dressed new baby, her own little sister. "I gave her the first kiss," says Bertha, "and the very first time she opened her big brown eyes and looked into mine she completely ravished my heart."

It was a joy to the mother to see the delight these sisters had in each other and she gladly excused Bertha from the other duties of the home and gave her the monopoly of the baby. Early and late this fond sister worked, fashioning the most beautiful baby garments, trimming them with lace which her own hands had wrought, till they were the wonder and admiration of all the neighbor women. Bertha washed the little clothes and hung out to dry whole long lines full of them. Then she would stay up till midnight, if necessary, to iron them, so that her beloved little sister might be kept always fresh and neat. Nothing was ever too good for that blessed baby. One day a neighbor woman told Bertha that if she wished her little sister to grow to be a famous woman she must always place her clothes high. Of course Bertha had no real confidence in this superstition, but to prove the height of her ambitions for her baby sister she often used to climb upon a high stool and hang the baby clothes on the highest available point—the corners of a motto, "Nearer My God To Thee," that hung above the door of their home.

Bertha's devotion to Vera led her to spend much time with her, teaching her all the cutest baby pranks, and then taking her out to show her off to her neighbors. Later she taught her how to talk and read. By the time she was three years old she had learned all the letters of the alphabet, and would read the letters of words before she had any idea what they spelled. She had a bewitching little habit of doing this, and then jumping at her own conclusions as to what they spelled, much to the amusement of her elders. Crossing a railroad one day she saw the sign "STOP" and read, "S-T-O-P, whistle!" At another time she saw the sign "PRODUCE" along the front of the Odd Fellow's Hall of the town, and read, "P-R-O-D-U-C-E, Odd Fellows' Hall!"

Vera's father was a great lover of children and always exercised a strong influence over them. His own little daughter he called his "pretty girl" and he loved her with all the devotion of his big father heart. One day when Vera was not yet three years old, Bertha took her from their home in Bently, where they then lived, to Wichita to have her picture taken. Vera somehow could not get away from the idea that her father did not know of their going, though the matter was clear to her older sister. When the train started Vera suddenly burst out: "There, the train's going and papa won't know where his pretty girl has gone to." The picture where she holds the banana in her hand is the one taken at that time.

Mr. Blinn had long felt God's call upon him for the ministry, but hesitated to answer it. He had very high ideals of what a minister of Christ should be and felt keenly his inability to measure up to them. He would have to begin too late in life to secure the preparation that he deemed necessary to his highest success. Because of this he cherished a hope that some day God would give him a son for the Gospel ministry in whom his high ambitions might be fulfilled, and then perhaps he himself could be excused. In 1893, when Vera was three years old, a little brother came into the home. Her father hailed him as his long-wished-for "preacher-boy," and they named him Paul. So veiled was the future from the father's vision that he could not then sense that He who has "chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty," and who tells us that in Christ Jesus there is "neither male nor female," would yet use his daughter, in a mightier way than he ever dared to hope, for the promotion of God's work in the world.

Mr. Blinn's conviction that he should enter the ministry finally became so strong that he felt he could not longer refuse, and in the autumn of 1894, he made his consecration complete. At the following session of the Arkansas Valley conference of the United Brethren Church he was appointed to his first charge. His devoted wife and family gladly shared his new responsibilities and entered with him heartily into his work.

"PAPA'S PRETTY GIRL"

When a tiny tot of three, Vera gave her first recitation at a convention of the Young People's Christian Union, and did so well that special mention of it was made in the village paper the next day. Several days afterwards a man who had been present at the convention called at the Blinn home and asked Vera to repeat the recitation. She promptly did so and was given a twenty-five cent piece as a reward. At the age of five she was placed before a county Sunday-school convention to recite the books of the Bible, which she did perfectly. When six years old she entered her sister's school, and under this loving tutorship was enabled to carry on work far beyond her years. Two years later the family moved to Attica, Kansas, where she was examined by the new school teacher, who was amazed to find that she was ready for the fourth grade.

Even as a little child Vera delighted to write and receive letters, as she saw the older people do. So she would write letters, give them to her father to mail, and then wait for the answer. Her father would put them in his pocket, scribble an answer on the sly, and a few days later would hand it to her. One day Vera suddenly asked him if there was any mail for her. Forgetting that he had failed to answer her last letter he thrust his hand into his pocket, took out some papers and gave them to her. A moment later she looked at him in surprise and exclaimed, "Why, they have sent my own letter back to me!"

Bertha was an earnest Christian, and an active worker with the Junior Endeavor Society of her

father's church. It was her practice to look up the Junior programs as given in the *"Watchword,"* write out the Scripture references, and have the children find and read them. All this was full of interest to her little sister, who soon decided that she was going to hold some meetings of her own. So she would find the *"Watchword,"* look up the references write them out, put them at the proper places in her Bible, then go into her "play-meeting," sit down behind a table, and turning to these passages read them in order, just as she had seen them do in the real meetings.

There was always a warmth of religious atmosphere in the Blinn home. Every day the father read the Bible and knelt in prayer with his family. The influence of this family altar probably had much to do with shaping the course of Vera's after life. She herself was taught to pray from her earliest childhood. She was converted and united with the church at ten, being received by her father, who was then pastor at Attica. It was about this time that her brother Paul, then only seven, received the rite of Christian baptism at the hands of his father. Being so young, an effort was made to persuade him to be sprinkled, but he had somewhere seen a picture of Jesus going down into the water and he stoutly replied, "No, sir, I want to be baptized just the same way Jesus was," so his wish was granted, and he was immersed. This scene left a distinct impression upon the other members of the family.

When Vera and Paul were aged respectively ten and seven, a rather remarkable and what might have

proved a very serious accident happened to them. It all began on the day of the county Sunday-school convention when they had the parade. Master Paul Blinn had been proclaimed marshall of the day. He was dressed in a blue serge suit, with a brilliant red sash about his waist, then seated on a beautiful spotted pony, and told that his business was to keep order. Proudly he rode up and down the line, exercising the full authority vested in him. At the close of this wonderful day Paul reluctantly gave up his pony and went home, but over in the pasture close to his home he saw a pretty little buckskin pony and was told that it belonged to him. An uncle had brought it during his absence, and left it for him to keep as his very own. Paul's joy was unbounded and he at once named his new friend "Billy." He was up bright and early next morning and ready for a ride on Billy. Vera begged him to let her ride some of the time, especially as he had had the honor the previous day. But Paul, in very un-Paul-like fashion, gave her to understand that the pony belonged to him and there was no more time for riding than he needed himself, so she was obliged to look helplessly on. Finally he rode over to the home of one of his playmates, and invited him to climb up behind and have a ride. Then the two boys decided they were not going quite fast enough, and Paul, being unacquainted with Billy's possibilities, ordered his friend to give him a kick in the ribs to make him go faster. The boy obeyed and the next instant both boys were pitched precipitately into the mud. A passing neighbor picked up Paul supposing him to be dead,

and hurried to the Blinn home with him. Mrs. Blinn was startled when she saw a man bringing in a limp, unconscious form, and heard him ask, "Is this your boy?" Paul was laid upon the bed and every possible effort made to restore him, but he remained unconscious by spells all the remainder of the day. Soon after noon Vera fell to thinking about that pony, and decided that if she was ever going to have a chance to ride him she would have to take it while her brother lay unconscious; so she bridled him, mounted his back, and rode bravely over to the home of a girl friend and invited her to join in the ride. A little later Vera was brought home more seriously hurt than Paul had been. All that afternoon and night the anxious parents watched and worked with her, wondering if she ever would regain her right senses. The pony had a long vacation after that and never again did they attempt to ride him double.

When Vera was eleven, a terrible blow fell upon the home. Her father fell sick and died. As he passed away she stood by his bed and heard him say, "If this be death, oh, how sweet it is to die!" He had made previous arrangements for his funeral, which was held in the Pleasant Valley church near his old home in Sedgwick County, Kansas. It was the same church where he had been received into the conference and where for more than thirty years, first as layman and later as pastor, he had worked so unselfishly and so faithfully.

Out of days of anguish and sorrow some of the best things of our lives are born. The death of Vera

REVEREND AND MRS. P. H. BLINN
AND CHILDREN

Blinn's father made indelible impressions on her young life. It was over his grave that she made some of her holiest vows and strengthened those ties which forever bound her to the love and service of God. The sainted father's mantle, all contrary to his expectation, had fallen upon his daughter.

"One ship drives East, another drives West,
While the self-same breezes blow;
It's the set of the sail, and not the gale,
Which guides them where they go.
Like the winds of the sea are the waves of the fates,
As we voyage along through life;
It's the set of the soul that decides the goal,
And not the winds of the strife."

"Who will call himself consecrated who will hold back the discipline of his will through study?"

From Vera Blinn's Notebook

CHAPTER II

HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE DAYS

"The heights by great men reached and kept
Were not attained by sudden flight,
But they, while their companions slept,
Were toiling upward in the night."

"Miss Blinn was a talented woman," we say. But her talents were developed and multiplied at a tremendous price. How great a cost we shall see as we follow her through those years in high school and college.

When Mr. Blinn died he left his family poor in purse but rich in the grace which is in Christ Jesus. They all had brave hearts and a keen appreciation of life's swift and solemn trusts. The eldest daughter, Bertha, had now married a minister, Reverend J. W. Burkett, and her going away from home placed upon the widowed mother the full responsibility of directing the lives of her younger children. With a purpose to provide the best possible education for them she moved to Lecompton, Kansas, where a United Brethren college was then located. A little later the college was moved to Holton, and she and the family followed.

Being without financial support and compelled to make a living for the family, the mother opened a boarding house for students, and for a series of years from ten to fourteen boarders were daily ministered to in this home. With unremitting toil and sacrifice this godly mother opened the way for educating her children, but she was not alone in her effort; her brave-spirited daughter stood with her and did a full share in caring for the work of the home. The things Vera learned in her struggle to contribute to the family upkeep formed a most valuable part of her education. She was a veritable "Martha" in the home, helping her mother to keep the house clean and orderly, doing the ironings, washing dishes, setting tables and waiting on them. In addition to this she often clerked in a store on Saturdays. Early and late she worked till people wondered when she ever had time for study; and yet one of her fellow-students says he never knew her to come to class with her lessons unprepared. With but two exceptions, she never had a grade under ninety percent, either in high school or college. Some Saturday mornings she would rise early and help her mother clean the entire house, go to the store and work all day, then do an ironing in the evening. And on Sunday, stormy or fair, she would attend every church service.

It was while a student at Holton that Vera began to think very seriously of being baptized by immersion. She felt that she would never be quite satisfied till she had witnessed for her Lord by being "buried with Him in baptism." Friends protested against

VERA BLINN
AS A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL

what seemed to them a "humiliating experience," but she was firm; so one beautiful Sunday afternoon in late springtime her favorite professor, Rev. W. S. Reese, went with her out to the bend of the creek northwest of Holton, where he administered to her this sacred rite, and she came out of the water shouting the praises of God. A great company of high school and college students had gathered to witness this service, and went away deeply impressed. One of Vera's teachers, recalling in later years this scene, writes: "I remember the first time I saw her, a bright-eyed, rosy-cheeked girl in high school at Holton. I felt sure that little girl would be heard from. Then when Professor Reese walked down into the water and buried her in baptism, she came out glorified. I never saw such a face. There seemed a halo surrounding the head of our happy college girl that all could see. She was so young, so capable, so willing to give her all."

During her first year in college, Vera came home one day in a high state of excitement and said, "Mamma, I have been elected delegate to the Y. W. C. A. Summer Conference at Cascade, Colorado. May I go if I will earn the money to pay expenses?" "Why, yes, Vera," answered her mother, "but how in the world will you ever make the money?" This was the momentous question to Vera. How could she ever make the money? There was a young man boarding in their home who was making his expenses through college by selling books. She went at once to him with her problem. Why could she not sell

ate them, laughing and joking meanwhile over their embarrassing plight. They wondered, as well they might, where two penniless girls would be able to find supper and lodging. Finally they tackled the afternoon's work in hope that some purchaser might be found who would be kind enough to keep them over night and wait for the pay till the book was delivered. They didn't find anybody who wished to trust strangers quite that far, but Providence provided for their need in a very unexpected way. One of them found a woman who wanted to go out for the evening, only she didn't have anybody to take care of the "kids." This was their chance. They promptly volunteered to take care of the children if she would give them their lodging and she gladly accepted their offer. There wasn't much in the house for supper, but they gathered what they could find and made some pancakes—not very good ones, for they lacked some necessary ingredients, but "to a hungry soul any bitter thing is sweet" and they ate them with a good appetite. When the supper was cleared away they gave all the children good baths, a luxury they had not enjoyed for many a day, put them snugly away in bed, and then went to slumberland themselves, feeling that they had done a full day's work. The next day their money arrived.

Vera's sister now lived at Wellington, Kansas, where her husband was serving as pastor of a church. The second summer of their canvassing Vera and Rose decided to cover all the towns between Holton and Wellington, a distance of more than two hundred

"RECORD BREAKERS"
VERA BLINN AND ROSE DAVIS AS BOOK AGENTS

miles, making the sister's home their terminal. This they accomplished successfully, and then, after a short rest, Rose left them and started alone to another part of the state, while Vera stayed and canvassed Wellington and the nearby towns. One day she started off for an afternoon's work, but came rushing back in less than an hour, with her face beaming, to tell her sister that she had just taken an order for a twenty-dollar Bible. A woman had a twenty-dollar gold piece left her years ago by a great-aunt who had died, and she never had decided what to do with it till that day when she had been persuaded to invest it in a Bible. "I couldn't wait till evening," said Vera, "but had to rush right back to tell you the good news." The Burkett family greatly enjoyed Vera's stay with them, for she was lively and full of good cheer, and almost every night she had some new and interesting canvassing experience to relate to them. In about two weeks' time she had canvassed that entire district and sold about $250 worth of books. Half of this was clear gain to her, as she boarded in her sister's home and had no personal expense. To this school girl $125 looked like a big sum of money for two weeks' work and she was radiant with joy over her success. She cleared over $300 in all that summer. She was then eighteen years of age.

In her work as book agent Vera was often exposed to the weather. She was obliged to stay in strange houses wherever they would give her refuge. The books were heavy to carry, especially when she had "loads" of them to deliver and nothing to aid her

other than her own willing arms and feet. Sometimes she had to take late trains or wait for connections in out-of-the-way depots. She could never forget one night when she had to wait for a midnight train and there was no agent at the station and no light. There was one house not far off and she went there, knocked, and asked if she might come in and stay till her train was due. She was admitted but soon found that the only occupants of the house were a drunken man and a dead woman. With as much tact as possible she soon excused herself and found the dark railway station welcome quarters after such an experience.

"My, I could write a book on the adventures of a book agent!" said Miss Blinn. "Sometimes I used to board a train to go to a new place, and I would just wish the train would go on and on and never stop. I have often gone to a door and rung the bell, and then wished no one would ever answer it. One evening after a hard day, when I was all tired out, I went to the door of a house and knocked. There was no answer; the people were evidently not at home, or else didn't care to bother with a book agent. Again I knocked and there was no response. Just then a couple of fresh looking, daintily-dressed girls came tripping past and glanced up at me and said, 'That's right, peck away, old woman.'" And at this recollection Miss Blinn broke into a peal of laughter.

Once this brave girl's courage completely failed her. She went to the door of a house and rang the bell, then before the call could be answered she turned and ran down the steps, hurried back to her room, and threw

herself down on the bed and cried as if her heart would break. She felt that she positively could never try to sell another book. Finally she dried her tears and said to herself, "My! my! this will never sell my books nor put me through school." Then she took a desperate grip on herself, and went to her task again.

The last summer of Vera's canvassing, Rev. and Mrs. J. W. Burkett were living at York, Nebraska, so she decided to go and make her sister's home her headquarters while she canvassed all the towns in that section. But canvassing for books did not yield as good returns in Nebraska as it had in Kansas, and the work became very disheartening. One day she jestingly wrote her sister: "I'm so glad this is the last summer. If I had it to do over again I believe I would get married or do something else desperate rather than canvass any more."

And yet Vera's college friends exclaim in amazement, "Miss Blinn didn't like canvassing? Why, none of us ever dreamed she didn't like it. She and Rose Davis would come back to school in the fall and talk over their experiences, and laugh over them and tell how much money they had made, till we supposed they had been having the very time of their lives!"

Deep and earnest as Miss Blinn was in her religious life, she was also a lively factor in the social life of the school. Her enthusiasm and good cheer were contagious. No one who knew her could ever forget her ringing laugh. She could give or take a joke with equal good humor. The college students recall yet that day after a storm of rain and sleet, how heartily

she laughed at the students and teachers when their feet suddenly slid from under them and left them lying in very undignified heaps on the icy sidewalks. And then, right in the midst of the fun, they saw her and her escort precipitated to the pavement in attitudes as ridiculous as any of them, and turned the laugh on her. Professor Alleman, who later became a teacher in Kansas City University, will never forget how she used to invite him down to her home to eat pickles. She knew they were a favorite delicacy with him, and he did not get them at his boarding place. The zoology class members recall the very interesting times they had together. One day some of them were in the laboratory cutting up a dog, when Vera appeared at the door and was so horrified at their cruelty that she could not be induced to enter the room. But when she found that a similar experience would be a necessary part of her education, she braced herself to it, and a few days later they came upon her in the same laboratory enthusiastically engaged in dissecting a cat, and pretended to be shocked at her "dreadful bloodthirstiness."

On a bright spring morning when the Y. W. C. A. girls were giving a breakfast, the cooks in the basement had plenty of work to keep them busy so long as Vera stood outside with a smiling face, waving her pancake turner and singing out to each passerby, "Pancakes, pancakes, nice hot pancakes, for you-u-u."

The Ides of May was the time when the students of Campbell College had their annual day of fun and frolic with the senior class of that year. The only

CAMPBELL COLLEGE

hope of escape for the seniors was in eluding them if they could. The wife of Professor Morgan, of York College, still recalls that fateful day in her college experience when she had hidden away the whole day, except when she went to classes under guard. But in the evening she remembered that she was due at an important committee meeting and dashed down the hall forgetting, for the moment, her danger. Suddenly she found herself surrounded by a swarm of girls and being whirled wildly round in Vera Blinn's arms as she laughed and sang with merry enthusiasm, "The Ides of May, little senior, the Ides of May." Needless to say that the year Vera was a senior she did not escape full payment for all the fun she had had with others at the Ides of May.

Vera was not popular with all her college mates. When she won in a contest, as she usually did, her unbounded, child-like joy in the triumph was not always pleasing to her opponents. Her intense interest in the miscroscope in science class made her sometimes claim too much time from the patient professor to the delay or annoyance of the other members of the class. It was sometimes hard for her to be patient with those who seemed to plod along too slowly with their school work, and then again she would give hours of her own precious time cramming facts into the cranium of some less brilliant student, who was preparing for a dreaded examination.

Vera was always an aggressive student, but her enthusiasm perhaps reached its highest point as leader of one of the literary societies of the college. She be-

came famous for "rushing the girls"—getting hold of the new girls that came to school and rushing them into her society before the others had time to "get a line on them." There were four literary societies in the college: the Calliopeans and Athenians, with their rivals, the Websters and Philos. Miss Blinn championed the cause of the Calliopeans, while Harlan Thomas, later a missionary to Africa, led the Websters. Rivalry ran high among these societies, and Vera's enthusiasm for her own was unbounded. It seemed a part of her very nature to fight to the limit for her cause, and she and Mr. Thomas found in each other formidable antagonists. To one who knows their friendship in later years and their keen appreciation of each other's work, it is hard to believe there ever was a time when they found their chief delight in outwitting each other.

Through her years of training, Vera's talent for public speaking found much opportunity for development. The teacher who took her through the advanced course of elocution and oratory at Campbell College says: "Never in those two years of strenuous drill and memory strain did I hear her complain when she came to recitations of not feeling fit to take her lesson. She certainly subjected the physical in her life." While yet a high-school student, she entered a prohibition contest at which she gave an oration on "The Fruits of Intemperance." At the dedication of the new high-school building at Holton, this girl of sixteen delivered the senior address. She was an ardent advocate of the cause of temperance, and

though young she used every opportunity to hurl with all the force of her being, the surest, swiftest arrows of her oratory against the liquor traffic. At a contest held in Campbell College, she gave an address on "The Right to Prohibit Wrong," which won for her the first prize of $20.

She was a "tiger" at debate. Even then she had a wonderful way of driving home her ideas and clinching them. Once she debated the question of government ownership of the railroads. At another time that of woman's suffrage, in which she championed the cause of the women. "My, but I can see her yet!" says a fellow-student. She could hardly stop talking, and flung out her last arguments as she backed slowly to her seat. In this debate her side won the unanimous decision of the judges.

With each passing year Vera's friends could see in her a gradual yielding of herself to her enlarging spiritual vision. During the winter of 1910, she and three other students of Campbell College were sent to Rochester, New York, to attend the great Student Volunteer Convention of North America. It was there the missionary fire in her heart burst into a flame. From that time her life was moved by a new and strong impulse. She heard the world challenge, and accepted it with all it meant. The other students who went were Mrs. Eva Thuma Wimmer, Mr. Harlan H. Thomas, and Mr. C. P. Southerland. The first two became missionaries in Africa for the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, and the last is a mission-

ary in South America. Miss Blinn cherished, to the day of her death, the hope of becoming a foreign missionary.

Miss Mary B. Martin was the college teacher who chaperoned these young people on the trip to the Rochester Convention. She says: "One evening at Rochester, after one of those great addresses, while in the quiet of our own rooms, Vera said, as the tears coursed down her cheeks, 'How I should like to go! but I can't, for mamma needs me so.' I tried to comfort her by telling her that if she was willing to go she had done her part, and that perhaps God might have a greater work for her here. She was all broken up, and I could but let her and her God commune together." One of her companions at the convention adds that Vera was so overwhelmed and burdened in spirit that for one whole day she was unable to go to the meetings, and spent the time alone in her room.

On the return of these four students to Holton, they held meetings in their own town and many of the towns and villages for miles around, at which they gave reports of the convention and kindled great missionary enthusiasm. They also wrote articles for the "Campbell College Charta." An extract from Miss Blinn's pen will best show the impression the convention made on her life:

"The Watchword of the Movement was 'The Evangelization of the World in this Generation.' As Ambassador Bryce told us, 'The task challenges every atom of your power. All that you can gain of knowledge and thought is not too much for the great

task that lies before you.' What does the realization of this watchword mean to the students of America? How is the evangelization of the world to be accomplished? When we think of the great continent of Africa alone with its millions of people—the largest section of pagan humanity on the face of the earth—we realize more fully the truth of Mr. Speer's statement when, in telling the story of a private soldier rolling off the deck of a ship and giving back the half-conscious strangled cry, 'Oh, friend, friend,' he said that this is the cry not of a private soldier but the constant pitiful cry of millions of needy humanity. Again we ask, 'How is our great mission to be fulfilled?' The only answer is that our motto, 'The evangelization of the world in this generation,' must be adopted as a personal watchword. Every Christian must realize that he has a part in the work at hand.

"When this watchword is taken personally, it enriches and widens the sympathies, emancipates a man from narrowness and selfishness, baptizes us with a sense of our oneness with all humanity, stimulates and exercises faith, promotes a life of reality, lends intensity to the life, develops the spirit of vision, and throws us back heavily on the supernatural, for if the world is to be evangelized in this generation there must be a strong accession of divine power.

"It is essential that we become absorbed with the vision of the unevangelized world, and that there be also a vision of the cross of Christ as we behold that scene of suffering love.

"John R. Mott, the great leader of the movement, impressed upon us that the great question is not whether or not we will become missionaries, not the relative claims of the home and foreign fields, but the one crucial, all important question is whether or not we will yield to Jesus Christ his rightful place as Lord and Master of our lives."

It is in this same issue of the "Charta" that Miss Blinn, as a representative of the Bible Study Committee, urges upon the girls of the college the necessity of forming a habit of daily Bible study and the observance of the morning watch.

For her graduation thesis, Miss Blinn wrote a masterful literary production on "The Educational Value of the Classics." Thus closed those years of strenuous high school and college work. She had learned well the lesson, which she afterward expressed so laconically in her note book, "Hard work is the price of a full, rich life."

Miss Blinn's teachers and fellow-students agree that her success, both in school work and in all her later life, was not due so much to her brilliancy of intellect as to her willingness to do a prodigious amount of hard work. She was talented. Who would not have been who had striven so hard and overcome so many obstacles to fit himself for life's tasks? Thomas A. Edison is right when he says "Genius is ninety-five percent hard work."

VERA BLINN
A GRADUATE OF CAMPBELL COLLEGE

"A teacher must be what he would impart."

"The dignity of the vocation of a teacher is beginning to be understood. * * * Skill to form the young to energy, truth, and virtue, is worth more than the knowledge of all other arts and sciences. * * * The encouragement of excellent teachers is the first duty which a community owes to itself. * * * The whole worth of a school lies in the teacher."

William Ellery Channing

CHAPTER III

A YOUNG TEACHER IN YORK COLLEGE

"There is a fire—
And motion of the soul which will not dwell
In its own narrow being, but aspire
Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
And but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
Of aught but rest."

READY to go at any time to the ends of the earth at her Lord's bidding, Vera Blinn knew that God's battle-fields are also right where you are, and that you must conquer and win today or you will never be fit for the fiercer conflicts of tomorrow. Every talent she had, both natural and acquired, she brought, together with all her fresh, young, vigorous life, and laid them down in full and glad surrender at the feet of Jesus Christ for Him to take and use as He should choose. And now, for her next place of service, God had graciously opened the way in "one of those minor providences that seem set in the years like exquisite mosaics of His mercy."

In the summer of 1909, while Vera was with her sister in York, Nebraska, she had been out canvassing for books one day and came back to the parsonage a

happy, bare-headed, rosy-cheeked girl and the president of York College was there. They were introduced and chatted together awhile of books and school work. He noted her frankness and enthusiasm, and when he went away he did not forget her.

She had said she was to graduate the following year. York College needed some good teachers, and he believed she would make one. He knew Professor W. S. Reese, of Campbell College, and wrote him a letter of inquiry as to Vera's fitness for the place. His reply was favorable and then the matter was taken up directly with Vera, who consented to come.

She graduated with honors from Campbell College in the spring of 1910. This was followed by a summer's work in post graduate studies in French and German at the University of Chicago, where she made good records and won many friends. Thus equipped, she came to York in the autumn of 1910 to take her place as a full professor in the college. She was twenty years old, and younger by ten years than any other teacher on the staff. At first there were some intimations that it was a mistake to call one so young for such a responsible position, but she soon proved to the satisfaction of all that she was thorough in scholarship, wise in judgment, and consecrated to her work.

Soon after her arrival in York, Miss Blinn was made sponsor for the senior class and her efforts with them helped to make her popular. One custom that still survives in the college dates back to her coming.

It is the Senior Recognition Day. The first class to be formally recognized was the one of 1911, whose program she had largely planned.

She entered heartily into the social affairs of the young people. She chaperoned the juniors, and was so sympathetic and friendly and jolly that her appearance among them was always hailed with delight. The second year in York she was made sponsor for the sophomores, and they never will forget how she helped them to carry through one of the most delightful Hallowe'en celebrations of their college days.

What hours of innocent fun they had together! She loaded them all into a big wagon and took them for a six-mile drive into the country to the home of a farmer, where they secured a generous supply of apples and pumpkins. The next day they all met in a barn, armed with butcher knives, and carved a fine regiment of jack-o-lanterns. Another evening they went to the home of some friends in the country, where they prepared part of the refreshments for the occasion and took them back to town in a wheelbarrow. The main floor of the conservatory was secured and they decorated it with cornstalks, autumn leaves and plenty of shining jack-o-lanterns, one of the largest of which grinned through a huge spider web that had been stretched across one corner of the room. The collegiate department and faculty were the invited guests of the evening. When ready to serve the refreshments, Miss Blinn was helping, and as she started to open a bottle of cream, she made a sudden wrong move and the next moment her face,

hair, and pretty pink dress were thoroughly spattered with cream. There was consternation for a moment, then she broke into a laugh, caught up a towel, mopped off the cream, and the program went merrily on.

Those who knew Miss Blinn say that she was very conscientious as a teacher. It was not her nature to do inferior work and she could not encourage it in others. She was absolutely fair in her dealings with the students and gave them their credits without fear or favor. If any student of her classes had low marks, he knew there was good reason for it. During her two years in the college she was never accused of giving an unfair grade.

She was quick to see through the clever devices whereby delinquent students sometimes "get by" in their recitations, and was adroit in dealing with them. At one time she suspected that some of her pupils were using a "pony" to aid them in their language lessons. She visited the library and found she was right—the "pony" was not there. They would be taking up another book soon. The "pony" for it was still there—but when the students went to look for it some days later they found it missing. She had taken care to provide against their next "day of temptation."

At one time she had asked a class to bring a written treatise on a certain subject. One member of the class was a brilliant and hard-working young man, later a professor in a great university, who had not found time to do the written work, but held in his hand several sheets of paper to give the appearance

of being prepared. When she called on him to recite he put on a brave face and dashed into it, pretending to read, but really making it all up as he went along. She permitted him to go on to the very close and then with a merry laugh said, "Well, Mr. ——, that was wonderfully well done for an entirely extemporaneous effort." The class was much amused to see that his trick had failed to deceive her.

Miss Blinn's work as a teacher was heavy and exacting. The college then had an enrollment of about five hundred students. It had state accreditment and granted state certificates, and everything had to be kept at the very highest standard. State inspectors often dropped in, sometimes men, sometimes women, and always without previous announcement. This young teacher was soon a favorite with these inspectors, and they spoke in high appreciation of her work.

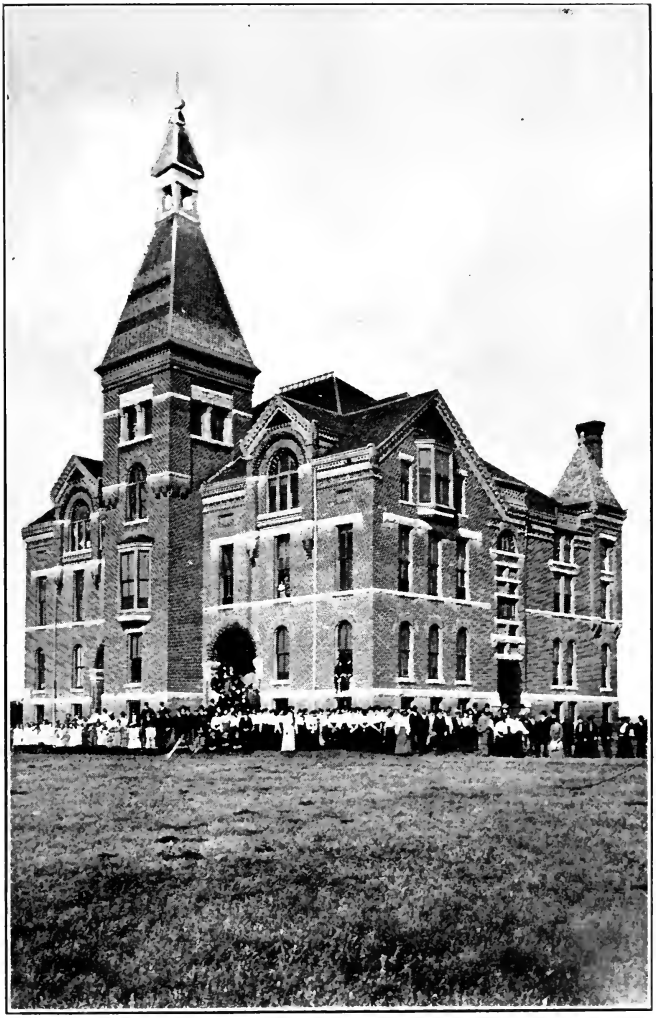
During all this time her heart power was keeping steady pace with her increasing mental strength. Her Christian influence in the college was something unusual. Herself a member of the Student Volunteer Band, "her soul aflame with love for her Master and with an unquenchable zeal for His cause, she was a daily evangel for the Kingdom, and touched with power the whole student body and the college church." It did not take others long to discover her rare abilities, and her influence soon reached out to other churches and communities whither she was called to speak in the interests of Christian work.

With her constantly increasing outside duties, Miss Blinn never neglected her work as a college teacher.

She never asked for off-time, and if she was ever sick no one in the school knew of it. She was punctual, attended to business, and graciously fitted into her place. "She was a pleasant person to work with," said the college president, "always considerate of another's viewpoint. She cooperated cheerfully in helping to bring the students up to high standards. When others said, 'It can't be done,' she contended that *what ought to be done could be done.* She was also good at 'blowing the college horn.' When I had to be away, I often asked her to write the college items for the city paper, and to these she gave time and effort. She always insisted that she could not 'write', but she could and did exceptionally well. She was so willing that she always had to do more than her share."

"She was so willing that she always had to do more than her share," are the words that echo and re-echo through our hearts. How true it is that willing hearts always have to do more than their share of the world's work, and how cheerfully and uncomplainingly they seem to do it. It is not until our willingness overflows our obligations that our lives become really profitable anywhere. It is this very unselfish, spontaneous quality of life that characterizes all God's best workers.

"Within sixteen years of my presidency of York College," continues President Schell, "a better teacher than Miss Blinn never came before a class. She had the faculty of inspiring the students to do their best. They found zest and even pleasure in their work as



YORK COLLEGE

she led them up the mount of knowledge. The Christian teacher performs a work, the far-reaching influence of which can be recorded only by angel hands in heaven. Miss Blinn did her part nobly and well in this role. We must wait for eternity's golden light to reveal the magnitude of her splendid service in translating Christian education into the lives of the many young people who sat at her feet as learners and with whom she mingled in the general work of those college years. She is, and will be, the ideal for a multitude of young people, and inspired by her beautiful Christian example and teaching, they will fill out nobler careers and live upon more exalted planes. She wrought a blessed ministry from first to last."

"I heard Him call,
'Come follow,' that was all.
* * *
My soul went after Him:
I rose and followed, that was all;
Who would not follow if they heard His call?"

"If one could assemble the girls who have been led to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior through her efforts, others who have dedicated themselves for definite Christian service, still others who have had new visions of Christ and His plan for the world, we must needs call them from the 'uttermost part.'"

Elsie Hall

CHAPTER IV

WIDENING SPHERES OF SERVICES

While a teacher in York College, Miss Blinn became secretary of the young women's work of the Nebraska Branch of the Women's Missionary Association of the United Brethren Church. It was through her excellent service in this capacity that the Church came to recognize her rare gifts of mind and heart, and her ability for leadership. At the general Board Meeting of the Women's Missionary Association, held in May, 1912, at Myerstown, Pennsylvania, she was elected general secretary of the young women's work, with the whole Church for her field.

Called to serve in this larger sphere, Miss Blinn felt herself quite unequal to the responsibilities it involved. She had solemnly dedicated her life to God for mission work. Could this be her field? In perplexity of spirit she spent a whole night in prayer for God's guidance, and finally decided that it was His chosen place for her, at least for the time being. A few weeks later she came to Dayton, Ohio, and wholeheartedly took up her work. She was introduced to the Church in the June *Evangel* (the organ of the Women's Missionary Association), and sent out her

first message to the girls of the Church in the July-August number. Her attitude toward her new task may best be expressed in her own words.

"Dear Girls: I hope that at the very outset you will feel that you know me and I know you, because we know a common Father and are interested in a common cause. A number of times in my life I have been permitted to see large companies of girls gathered together, and invariably there has come to me with extraordinary force the thought, 'What wonderful possibilities are wrapped up in these girls!' And today, as in my mind I see the faces of hundreds of bright, happy, enthusiastic, loving girls of our own Church, I think of what great plans the Master has for each life, and how proud we should be, that, even as girls, we can have a part in the extension of His Kingdom. And, girls, my vision widens, and back of you all, in the distance, I see faces of girls who are less happy and less bright, but none the less lovable. 'These, too, must ye bring.' For the coming year may we not be bound together by a circle of prayer that shall encircle the world?"

Miss Blinn had a right appreciation of the power of prayer. Among the first things she did after taking up her work was to urge the people of the Church to their knees for the full surrender of their lives to Christ for service. Her spirit was moved as she found multitudes of women and girls all over the Church who were yet unenlisted in the work of missions. *"Ours is the power to pray them out,"* she said. Everywhere she went she pressed home the truth that

it is only our own lack of faith and half-hearted consecration, our own coldness, that keeps back Christ's redemption from a lost world. Pray! Unceasingly pray! was her message. Pray in earnestness for the extraordinary, the limitless, the glorious. Pray with real confidence for blessings, the realization of which you cannot imagine a way—for we believe in an infinite Father. Things are changing as you pray. Christ's expectation will be realized the sooner. "He shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied." The power of the blood of Jesus is being released anew upon the world. It was with such daring faith as this that Miss Blinn challenged the Church from the very beginning of her public work.

From early childhood the missionary fire had been burning in Miss Blinn's heart. The first missionary book that ever came to her hands left a deep impression on her life. She was nine years old when her father bought Bishop Mills' book on "Our Work in Africa," the year following the massacre of our missionaries. She read that book until she knew it almost by heart. The first missionary she ever heard was Mrs. H. K. Shumaker. When she heard her, she determined that some day she would go to China. The *Evangel* was always in her home, a constant influence. The *Watchword* was sent to her for a year as a gift from her father on her eighth birthday, and she read it ever afterward.

The influence of missionary literature upon Miss Blinn's own life led her to see quickly its value in her work with the girls. In the October number of

the *Evangel* she had an article entitled, "Is Missionary Literature Interesting for Girls?" the fascinating appeal of which could scarcely be resisted by any normal girl. She recommended some of those books and papers that had meant so much to her: "The Life of David Livingstone," "Life of Alice Jackson and Mary Agnew," "The Mother of a Thousand Daughters," "China's New Day," "The Chinese Revolution," "Mormonism, the Islam of America," "Missionary Review of the World," and the "Evangel." Then she went on to say: "What is mission study? Nothing less than a voyage of discovery into the realm of human life. There is nothing so interesting to humanity as humanity itself. What we call dry, dead missionary literature is quivering and throbbing with life. It lifts us out of ourselves as individuals and makes us a part of the great world. It gives us a vision of a deeper life, a vision of a needy world, a vision of Jesus Christ himself. It deepens our prayer life. It gives a larger Christ, a larger gospel and brings to us abundant life."

During her first year as secretary of the young women's work, Miss Blinn studied conditions among the girls and women of the Church and sought means for improving them. She attended a summer conference of the Young Women's Christian Association at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and later an interdenominational conference of student secretaries with the National Board of this association in New York City. From the latter she came away with these words burning into her heart: "The greatest work to which

a human soul may address itself is to seek to know the purpose of Jesus Christ in coming into the world, and to set about the work of fulfilling that purpose." In both these conferences she had been led to see the greater possibilities of her department. At the end of the year, when she brought her report to the Women's Board Meeting, held in Bloomington, Illinois, in May, 1913, she recommended that the young women's work be organized under the name of the "Otterbein Guild" with this covenant:

"Grateful that 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,'

"Mindful that vast millions of women and girls can never hear the 'tidings of great joy' unless a Christian woman be sent to them,

"Remembering that Jesus made loving obedience the supreme test of discipleship, and that His last, most solemn command was 'Go teach all nations,'

"I gladly enter into this covenant of obedience, that I will not cease to make offerings of prayer, time and money to the end that the daughters of sorrow in all lands may know the love of Jesus."

She also recommended plans for the enlargement of the work, for relating it definitely to the mission boards, and for closer cooperation beween it and the student department of the Young Women's Christian Association; also that representatives be sent to student conferences, and that adequate missionary literature be provided that would be adapted to the needs of students.

She closed her splendid report to the board meeting with this challenge: "We have not even yet

touched the hem of the possibilities of the department. My heart throbs with gratitude to God for His great blessing upon the work, and the tremendous need for more work makes me restless. The power for the great task given to our young women, the power to meet the challenge that comes at this great moment, will not be found in our organizations, nor in our members, nor in our money, but the power that shall be adequate can be found only in our Lord Jesus Christ, who laid down His life even to the cross; and it will call for no less in our own lives, for 'greater works than these shall ye do.'" This report and all these recommendations were adopted.

Miss Blinn's many-sided task now consumed her whole time and strength. She traveled all over the Church, giving missionary addresses, organizing local missionary societies and Otterbein Guild Chapters, holding institutes, introducing missionary books, and holding classes for mission study. She engaged the girls and women in systematic Bible study, wrote articles for the *Evangel* and other papers, kept up a large correspondence with representatives of the work, and often filled the pulpits for pastors on Sundays. She frequently visited the colleges of the Church, bringing the power of her glowing personality to bear upon the students, interesting them in missions, and leading them to larger visions of life. In the year of 1913, she visited the annual conference in West Virginia. There were only a few organized missionary societies in the State at that time. She was very kindly welcomed at the conference, given two periods

on the program, and before the close of the session had made engagements with twenty-six different pastors, whose fields she visited a little later and organized eleven local missionary societies and eleven Otterbein Guild Chapters. She always had a warm place for West Virginia in her heart, and called the branch in that conference her "child."

In a wonderful extract from the *Missionary Review of the World,* Miss Blinn sounded the note of self-sacrifice which she believed essential to effective missionary service. "What is the real heart of the missionary problem?" she asks. "It it a problem of men, or of money, or one of prayer? It includes each of these phases, but it is deeper than any or all of them. If we press past all secondary considerations right home to the real heart of the missionary problem, we shall find that it is a problem of love—personal love for the Lord Jesus Christ. Why? Because the very soul of missions is sacrifice, and nothing less and nothing else than divine love can call forth the sacrifice that is needed.

"Those words, 'He saved others, himself he cannot save,' flung derisively at Jesus as he hung upon the cross, were, nevertheless, the expression of a profound truth. Had the Lamb of God, in retaliation for that mocking cry, come down from the cross, our salvation would not have been an accomplished fact. He has saved us, but it cost Him His own life blood to do it.

"There is need today to re-emphasize this principle of sacrifice in missions as one that is fundamental,

essential, vital. God laid the foundation of this work of world redemption in sacrifice when it cost Him His only begotten Son, and He will finish it in no less worthy spirit or costly means."

Miss Blinn always cultivated an optimistic disposition. She had a definition of an optimist that she particularly liked—a person who makes lemonade at night from the "lemons" that have been handed to him during the day. She was in a marked degree free from personal sensitiveness but was keenly sensitive to anything that affected the Church or the cause of Christ.

She believed that "Christians ought to be militant, not merely manicuring their morals." She herself was decidedly aggressive in her methods, yet she used such charming tact that she opened the way for herself to bring messages and to organize missionary societies in churches that had never before taken any active interest in missionary work. At one country charge, where she gave an address and wished to effect a missionary organization, the women told her there was no use, for they had no way to come to the meetings; their husbands were busy with the horses and there was nobody to bring them. With her quick wit she at once turned upon the men, and asked "If we form a missionary society, how many of you men will see that a way is provided for your wives to come to missionary meetings?" They promptly capitulated and promised, almost to a man. She had carried the day. The society was organized.

Everywhere Miss Blinn travelled she roused the people to the missionary task, and made many friends among those of "like precious faith." She served the Church and the Women's Missionary Association with unabating zeal, with an utter disregard of all physical needs and all personal desire. It was a joke among her friends that she would rather give a missionary address than eat her dinner. She was never happier than when burning into the hearts of others the convictions that had been so deeply branded on her own.

She was intense and forceful as a speaker. Her great ambition was to carry a living message straight into the living hearts of the world, and she did it. She had not been long in the field till her influence had clear overleaped the bounds of the Otterbein Guild work, and was moving upon the lives of thousands of men and women and young people throughout the Church wherever they had heard her rousing appeals. And yet she always felt herself so weak, so insufficient for her great task, that often when her addresses were over she suffered almost to the point of despondency lest she had failed to do her very best. Her friends sometimes heard her exclaim, "Oh, I feel like saying I shall never give another public address!" And yet they all knew that, when her distress had abated, she would seize with eagerness the very next opportunity of this kind that came to her.

Early in January, 1914, Miss Blinn attended the Student Volunteer Convention held in Kansas City,

Missouri. Here she claims to have received a new and enlarged vision of Christ, and expressed the hope that He would become so incarnated in her life as to result in more efficient service. How deeply this occasion wrought upon her heart may be judged from a message she wrote soon afterwards:

"We saw how the *crucified* Christ, the *loving* Christ, the *risen* Christ calls us all into the fellowship of His own sufferings. And as we saw that new image of our loving Lord and Savior how we cried out with David Livingstone, 'O divine Love, I have not loved Thee deeply, fully, warmly, nor strongly enough!' How we prayed with one of old, 'O God, for Jesus Christ's sake give *me* Thy Holy Spirit!' How we yearned to have our will submerged in His own! How we pleaded that the tender, compassionate, loving, suffering Christ might be lifted up in our lives, because if He is lifted up He will draw men unto Him! Surely 'the poison of a selfish will obscures the light of God!' And how truly 'He that loves not lives not!' Notwithstanding the deep, abysmal need of the world, with its millions of waiting, hungry hearts, we felt that the supreme need is the need of unredeemed personal wills. With the convention quartet the song and prayer of our hearts was, 'O wash me now, without, within—or purge with fire if that must be—no matter how—if only *sin* die out in me." When sin has died out, when the Cross has really touched us, there will come a passionate surrender to the will of God, an eagerness to *suffer with* Christ and to bear in our

lives the scar-marks of Jesus, which are the sole test of our faithfulness and discipleship.

"These then are the questions for Christians to face: Can we say that we bear in our bodies the marks, the scars of the Lord Jesus? Have others seen in our lives the print of the nails? Is there on our gift the print of the nails?

" 'As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' We are sent to be His messengers in the same spirit in which Christ was His messenger—the same spirit of love, the same spirit of sacrifice—and this is possible only when Christ is made incarnate in our lives. The power of sacrifice, the power which alone is in the life that bears the nail prints, this power which is the greatest unwielded power of missions, can and will be ours when the love of Christ is ours. If that divine love really grips us, it will constrain us and take us to the ends of the earth. Yea, 'nothing have I done but everything will I do for Thee, who died for me.' "

Miss Blinn felt that one of the greatest privileges that ever came to her life was that of hearing Dan Crawford, the great Scotch missionary and author of "Thinking Black," and she often spoke of the wonderful message he gave. He told his audience that he had not come to give them pleasure, but to knock them down with the facts of their neglect, to put a revolver to their ear as it were, and make them take notice of their duty. He said that Christianity meant more than getting up and saying "Let's sing hymn number 65." For twenty-three years he had worked in Africa.

but he declared he would rather *work twenty-three years* than *talk about it twenty minutes.* Then he related the story of his life. How, when a Scotch laddie living not far from Livingstone's old home, he heard his parents tell of the man whose heart lay buried in Africa, and resolved to "follow in his train." He heard that Livingstone had said Central Africa was nearer the bottomless pit than any other point on the globe, and he determined in his heart to take the flag of Jesus Christ from the dead hero, Livingstone, and plant it on those battlements of hell. He told many of his experiences amid the tall grass of Central Africa, where he had stayed twenty-three years without a furlough; of how he had tried to literally "think black" with the people and how he had voluntarily become a slave to Chief Mushidi in his efforts to study the black man and be able to get his viewpoint of things. Then he told of his marriage, after ten years of missionary life, to the dear Scotch lassie who had braved the long journey to him alone; then later came the burial of their first-born. He said the natives had called him the "White Angel," and said, "What a wonderful Jesus Christ He must be to have such white angels!" When he returned to his old home at Greenock-on-the-Clyde, he climbed the hill, rushed into the house, buried his face in the lap of his old mother whom he had not seen for twenty-three years, and they sat thus for two hours, his mother stroking his hair and neither speaking a word. And Dan Crawford said he was going back to

Africa to finish his course there; back to his great task, his assurance for success expressed in the words written on the fly-leaf of his Bible:

"I cannot do it alone.
The waves run fast and high,
The fogs close chill around,
And the light goes out in the sky;
But I know that we two
Shall win in the end,
Jesus and I.

"Coward and wayward and weak,
I change with the changing sky,
Today so safe and brave,
Tomorrow too weak to try;
But He never gives in,
And I know that we two shall win,
Jesus and I."

If it had been possible to make a deeper impression for missions on Miss Blinn's life than had already been made, Dan Crawford is the man who could have done it. After hearing him she decided she would as soon go to Africa as China.

During the winter of 1914-1915, Miss Blinn's health became impaired, and she was obliged to undergo an operation in a hospital at Omaha, Nebraska. Just before she left for Omaha, her pastor came to read the Bible and pray with her. "What chapter would you like to have me read?" he asked. "The

ninety-first Psalm," she quickly replied. Some days later while convalescing at the hospital, she wrote in one of the first letters she was able to send to her friends, "When they gave me the anesthetic, I went to sleep repeating the ninety-first Psalm."

As soon as health would permit she took up her work again, and when the board meeting was held the following May she was there planning with others for the forwarding of the work that now held the central place in her heart and life. Once again she pleaded with the women for the development of their untouched resources in Christ. She told a story of a Chinese missionary who once saw an old woman sitting on the bare ground on a cold winter day, feeling about her, if by chance she might find a few weeds or cornstalks to light a fire under her brick bed and to cook herself a morsel of bread, all unmindful of the fact that just beneath her was a great undeveloped coal mine. "I should like to sound out the call," said Miss Blinn, "to the women of our Church to speedily discover and develop and appropriate to themselves for their task this great untouched coal mine: *Pray ye therefore.*"

During the three years of Miss Blinn's work as secretary of the Otterbein Guild the membership of that department grew from 4058 to 6848, and their total gifts to missions from $4629 to $10,417. But how can mere statistics give us any adequate measure of her work? She wrought with dynamics—the dynamics of the Holy Spirit of God.

In a factory building there are wheels and gearings;
There are cranks and pulleys, beltings tight or slack;
Some are whirling swiftly, some are turning slowly;
Some are thrusting forward, some are pulling back;
Some are smooth and silent, some are rough and noisy,
Pounding, rattling, clanking, moving with a jerk;
In a wild confusion, in a seeming chaos,
Lifting, pushing, driving—but they do their work.
From the mightiest lever to the tiniest pinion
All things move together for the purpose planned;
And behind the working is a mind controlling,
And a force directing, and a guiding hand.

So all things are working for the Lord's beloved;
Some things might be hurtful if alone they stood,
Some might seem to hinder; some might draw us backward;
But they work together, and they work for good,—
All the thwarted longings, all the stern denials,
All the contradictions, hard to understand.
And the force that holds them, speeds them, and retards them,
Stops and starts and guides them, is our Father's hand.

Annie Johnson Flint

CHAPTER V

A HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

"Dear Girls of Mine, I scarcely know how to begin this letter. By the time you read these words you probably will have known that I have resigned my position as your secretary of Otterbein Guild. You can never, never know what it cost me to do this, but I did it because I felt it necessary on account of my health and other uncontrollable circumstances that I cannot explain here, and I believe it is God's will for my life just now. But I want you to know that although my official relation is discontinued, my heart is with you and with the work that we mutually love and for which we have labored together.

"The richest experiences of my life have come to me during these three years of our blessed fellowship together. I have known nothing in the work but pure, unadulterated joy. I have made many, many choice friends. How I love you every one, dear women and girls of the Association, as I have met you in your homes, churches, and conventions! I feel as if a part of my life had been taken away. Won't you please read Philippians 1:3-11 as my personal message to each of you.

"Always yours faithfully and lovingly."

This was the farewell message that faced the readers of the *Evangel* for October, 1915. A baffling combination of affairs had come into Miss Blinn's life which led her to feel quite sure that it was her duty to resign her work with the Women's Missionary Association and go home to her mother in York, Nebraska, and take up teaching.

When the last tie was broken and she had started homeward, there came to her an almost overwhelming sense of what it all meant—this step she was taking. "Have I put my hand to the Gospel plow and am now looking back?" was the question that kept forcing itself upon the mind of this conscientious girl. When finally she drove up to the door of her home in York, her mother came out to welcome her. "Oh, mamma, I've made a mistake," were almost the first words she said. With lagging footsteps, she entered the house and threw herself across the bed and wept till the pillow was wet with tears. A few days later York high school opened and she was there as one of the teachers, and nobody guessed that she was already homesick for her old place in the heart of the Church that loved her.

Here in the high school, as everywhere else, Miss Blinn's glowing personality constituted her a natural leader. From the time her merry ha! ha! first went ringing through the halls, she rapidly grew in favor with the young folks. The remarkable thing was that with all this buoyancy and free nature of hers she never had a bit of difficulty in holding that place

of respect among the students which is requisite to a teacher of influence. Discipline was no problem with her. All her work was done in such a constructive way that there was no time for mischief during school hours. Not a pupil in her classes could be jollier than herself. If they wanted to have a good time, she would gladly share it with them at a fitting time and place. She took interest in their student social affairs or in anything that called for merriment or adventure. As guardian of the Camp Fire Girls, she took them camping and was always a girl with them. She delighted to help them cook savory suppers over bonfires and to play cheerful games. When a bunch of girls came together at any time, they usually wanted to go and call on Miss Blinn. She always seemed to have time for them, and she exerted an unmistakably strong influence over them. One of their most exciting experiences was when they tried to run a "Ford" by themselves and upset into the ditch. Nobody was hurt, though all were a little frightened.

Miss Blinn's religion did not mean restraint to her, but freedom and enlargement. It was "of that cheerful and inspiring type that commended the Christian faith in winsome ways to those who came within her influence." Even in her merriest hours all of her pupils knew that her greatest desire was to draw them nearer to the Cross of Christ; that her great heart-prayer was summed up in those favorite lines of hers:

"Shine through my life that every friend of mine
Shall find it easier to be a friend of Thine."

One of Miss Blinn's strong qualities as a teacher was that she was able to give her pupils proper perspective for their whole school life. She could talk with genuine enthusiasm of the books they would be studying farther on, and of the wonderfully interesting and valuable things they would learn. This naturally created in them a thirst for knowledge, and helped to lay a foundation for their whole future education. She also gave them well-balanced and wholesome ideas regarding the use of their leisure hours. She was sponsor for the freshman class both years she spent in high school. She trained the juniors for their annual entertainments, and strove to make each program such as would have real educational value. Her influence was most salutary in helping to conquer the undesirable features of entertainment that are prone to creep into modern high school life.

While holding in check all that was corrupting or debasing to her pupils, this young teacher tried to put all that was truest and sweetest and sunniest and strongest into their lives. The superintendent of the York city schools has said that in character building among her pupils, Miss Blinn had no superior among the forty-five teachers under his charge. He also added that she was a notable example of a brilliant intellect and a devout spirit, coupled with an exuberance of life and jollity. She had a large and well-balanced capacity of intellect, sensibility, and will—in the words of Cicero, "inexplicable preeminent."

Among Miss Blinn's fellow-teachers in York was a young woman, the daughter of a minister, who,

strange to say, had lost her Christian faith and took no interest in religious affairs. Miss Blinn saw in this friend rich possibilities of service for Christ, and set herself to win her when others had almost given her up as hopeless. Gloriously her faith was rewarded when several years later a letter from this friend reported that she had accepted Christ as her Savior, and that she was going to the church the next Sunday to be received into membership and to share in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. When, not long after her conversion, she left for Europe to engage in war work, she said in a good-bye letter to Miss Blinn, "If I never come back I want you to know how I love you and how I thank you for what you have put into my life." Since the war closed, this young woman has been engaged in traveling among the cities of our own country in the interests of the Near East Relief. She says: "To have been admitted to intimate friendship with Vera Blinn was one of the rarest privileges that ever came to my life. She was an ideal friend, for when she gave her love she also gave of herself unreservedly. In the beginning of our friendship I had no interest in Christian work, but she loved me in spite of it and never made me feel that she thought she was better than I. She entered into all my interests, and I began to respect and love her because she was so good and yet so human. I think it was that which made me feel that her religion meant everything to her—and I began to think more seriously. She never 'preached' to me, but I know she prayed for me. She used to ask me to go to

church with her occasionally, and sometimes would send me a little book to read. I shall never forget her loving letter when I wrote her that I was to unite with the church. It was the every day life of Miss Blinn that made the impression, for she truly lived what she believed."

When she took up her work with York high school, Miss Blinn was glad to ally herself again with the United Brethren Church of that city, where she found a warm welcome and soon became active in the various departments of the work, especially the Women's Missionary Association. In her enthusiasm she inspired the women to an effort to make every woman and girl in the church a member, either of the Women's society or the Otterbein Guild. She organized and taught a mission study class, using as her text book "Our Church Abroad," and gave a number of interesting missionary lectures in the church. The whole membership soon began to evidence a new interest in missions and talked of assuming the full support of a missionary, which at that time required $500 a year. Many thought this an impossible undertaking, but Miss Blinn's courage helped the faithful pastor to dissipate doubt, and after consultation and prayer a day was set for the consummation of the plan. Miss Blinn had consented to be the speaker on that particular Sunday morning, but it was with a troubled face that she entered the church, for there was a pouring rain and poor prospects for an audience. Her pastor only smiled and said, "The Lord's weather never interferes with the Lord's work." Out of a full

heart, Miss Blinn brought her message that morning. The pledges of money given exceeded the $500 goal, and York church began the support of a missionary in Porto Rico, which work it has continued ever since. Practically every woman and girl of the York church was definitely enlisted in the missionary work that year—a thing unparalleled in any other church in the denomination. On Woman's Day alone seventy-one new members came forward, thirty-two of whom had been brought in by Miss Blinn's own mother. Is it any wonder that the York pastor, as he now recalls those days, says, "Thank God for Miss Blinn! May her life be multiplied a thousand times! The influence of her towering faith and unswerving loyalty abide with the church today." And is it any wonder that Miss Blinn used to thank God over and over again for her own wonderful mother?

During those two years in York, Miss Blinn lived over again and again the days when she had traveled over the church, the experiences she had had, the places she had visited, the good people she had met, the good dinners she had eaten, the pleasant surprises the girls had now and again sprung on her. She recounted to her friends incidents—of the place where the boys helped the girls so much with their missionary work, of the time in Indiana when she had made her "maiden speech," of the institutes in Ohio where she and Mrs. H. K. Shumaker had traveled together, and where, she said, "One morning I made the worst failure I ever made in my life with a speech. Mrs. Shumaker

thought it was because my collar was too tight, but I took it off at noon and did still worse in the afternoon." Then there was that place where the pastor so much wanted an Otterbein Guild in his church that he had come to her and said, "Don't you leave here until this child is born," and, once born, what a surprising growth that "child" had made. These incidents were now pleasant memories, but above all she gloried in the spiritual achievements. All other experiences were but mere incidents by the way.

Never once did Miss Blinn lose her deep interest in "her girls" all over the Church, and she kept in close touch with them through the *Evangel.* She rejoiced when a capable secretary was found for the Otterbein Guild, and wrote a loving recommendation of her to the girls. In her various writings is seen constantly flaming forth a desire to make more intelligent and useful and worth-while the lives of the girls of the whole Church. One of her strong and beautiful messages to them was as follows:

THE KING'S SIGNET

"In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee * * * and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee." Haggai 2:23.

"'In that day,' he says. What greater day than this? This is the one day in all the history of the world when young people need to equip themselves to carry forward courageously and well the banners of the militant church of Jesus Christ. What young

woman of today wants it said of her, 'She lived at a great moment, but she had no greatness with which to meet it?'

"Now a signet used by a king is not of gold or silver; it is not set with diamonds and rubies and pearls. It is made of common, ordinary clay. And so this call today comes not solely to the young woman of extraordinary ability or excellent training, but to all of us who are of the mediocre class. Jesus Christ, looking down into the heart of every young woman of his church, viewing there the capabilities and possibilities which are often unknown to the girl herself, says, 'I want you for my signet. I have a great work to do. It matters not to me whether you are a school girl, clerk, stenographer, teacher, or just a daughter in the home—I need you for my work. Give me just the ordinary clay of your life, which may often seem to you monotonous and humdrum, and I will touch it with my own life and quicken it with my own power, and you shall be my signet in this great day, my daughter.'

"A signet is always stamped with the image of the king. 'I want to take this common clay and fashion it according to my own will, stamp it with my own image, and send you out to express my love to the world.' Jesus Christ not only shows us in His own example the blessedness of a life in a fellowship with the Father, but He makes it possible for us. Our Lord takes us up into a relationship of love with Himself, and we go out into life inspired with His spirit to work His work. To feel thus the touch of God on our

lives changes the world. Will you today be willing to receive this touch, this image of the King on your life? 'In this great day, young woman, I want to take you and make you a signet, for I have chosen you.' "

During the summer vacation of 1916, Miss Blinn made a visit to the United Brethren home mission field in New Mexico. Her brother, Paul, accompanied her as far as Colorado, and they climbed Pike's Peak together. This proved rather a more serious pleasure than they had anticipated, and they found themselves trying to make their way down the mountain side after dark and Miss Blinn so tired she could hardly take another step. Paul tried to carry her but they could not make much progress that way. It was midnight when they reached the half-way house, where they roused the keepers and persuaded them, with some difficulty, to take them in for the remainder of the night.

The touch with the home mission work in New Mexico roused in Miss Blinn all the old missionary fire. She fell in love with the Mexican girls of the mission as soon as she saw them. She was shown the place where the "Penitentes" march for their annual celebration, bearing their heavy crosses and lashing their bodies till they are covered with welts and bleeding gashes. She saw the multitudes scattered and without a shepherd. This great need within our very gates stirred the heart of this earnest girl and sent her home to plead for the home mission work with flaming enthusiasm.

In addition to her high school work at York, Miss Blinn often spent Sundays in other towns, giving her messages and then hurrying home to be ready for her work on Monday mornings. In this way she greatly developed and strengthened the work of the Nebraska Branch of the Women's Missionary Association. One day in the autumn of 1916 she received a message from Dayton, Ohio, asking if it would be possible for her to go to Lawrence, Kansas, to present the interests of the Association at the annual conference then in session in that city. It was the first time the Association had asked such service from her since she left Dayton and her heart leaped at the opportunity. She found that she could get a release from school work for a day or two and began preparations for the trip. While packing her suit case she exclaimed "This makes me homesick!" then suddenly turned away to hide from her mother the fast-falling tears. The next spring she was asked to go to Wichita, Kansas, to speak for the Association at the General Conference of the Church. Those who heard her on that occasion will never forget the impressiveness of her appeal.

People everywhere marvelled at Miss Blinn's unusual ability as a speaker. It was only her most intimate friends who knew the long hours of study and prayer she spent in preparing her public addresses. The one she gave at the General Conference had consumed all the time she could spare for days. Once she started for a walk to think through that message and became so absorbed that, almost before she was

aware of it, she found herself three miles from home. Sometimes she was obliged to speak without having much time for preparation, but as a rule her addresses were carefully studied, sifted, and driven hard into her own soul before she attempted to give them to others. It was this thoroughness of preparation, together with her own true, rich, overflowing spiritual life that made her a speaker of such persuasive power.

"Thou must be true thyself
If thou the truth wouldst teach;
Thy soul must overflow
If thou another soul wouldst reach;
It needs the overflow of heart
To give the lips full speech."

In the spring of 1917, Miss Blinn was asked to return to Dayton and take the editorship of the *Evangel.* The former editor was going to be married and go to China. Miss Blinn finally consented, and the brave, self-sacrificing mother gave her a cheerful release from home obligations and bade her Godspeed to her new work. She could not keep back from Him the child He so obviously claimed as His own. Then the mother and Paul decided to sell the home in York and move to Wichita, where they could be near Bertha and her family.

In accepting the call to become *Evangel* editor, there was one big question that kept ever and again recurring to Miss Blinn's mind: *Why could she not have been going to China?* Just before leaving Nebraska for the East she met a trusted friend and said, "I cannot understand this providence. My heart has always been

set on going to China or some other foreign mission field. I have worked hard to equip myself and have severed, at terrible cost to myself, every tie that would bind me from that work, and now I am asked to go back to Dayton and become *Evangel* editor. Why is it this way? Can you tell me?" "Perhaps," replied her friend, "It is because God is not willing that your sphere of service be limited to China alone, but wants to use you for Africa, Japan, Porto Rico, and the Philippine Islands—all our foreign fields—and at the same time to help lift the Church at home to a higher spiritual plane."

The friend who gave her this answer is the one who writes these words, and later years proved that she was right. Miss Blinn loved the whole world. *Her field was the world.*

Laid on Thine altar, O my Lord Divine,
Accept this gift today, for Jesus' sake;
I have no jewels to adorn Thy shrine,
Nor any world-famed sacrifice to make;
But here I bring within my trembling hand
This will of mine—a thing that seemeth small,
But Thou alone, O Lord, canst understand,
How, when I yield Thee this, I yield my all.

Hidden therein Thy searching gaze can see
Struggles of passions, visions of delight,
All that I have, or am, or fain would be—
Deep loves, fond hopes, and longings infinite.
It hath been wet with tears, and dimmed with sighs,
Clenched in my grasp till beauty hath it none;
Now from Thy footstool, where it vanquished lies,
The prayer ascendeth—May Thy will be done!

Take it, O Father, ere my courage fail,
And merge it so in Thine own will that even
If, in some desperate hour, my cries prevail,
And Thou give back my gift, it may have been
So changed, so purified, so fair have grown,
So one with Thee, so filled with peace divine,
I may not know or feel it as my own,
But gaining back my will may find it Thine.

Used by Vera Blinn in Evangel

CHAPTER VI

EDITOR OF THE EVANGEL

"All My Friends know that I never did, cannot now, and never can write what editors call an 'article'! Now just what the qualifications of an article are, I do not know, but I do know that I never wrote one." Who would fancy such a statement as this coming from the pen of a young woman a year before she was called to the editorial chair of the *Evangel*—a place which she most capably filled for two and a half years?

Miss Blinn's work had meant so much to the Nebraska Branch of the Women's Missionary Association that it was not easy for them to give her up. "But then I suppose we shall have the Lord left," said one of the women. So back to Dayton Miss Blinn came, back to the welcome fireside of Doctor and Mrs. S. D. Faust, where she had previously made her home and whom she had come to call "father and mother Faust." Back she came to the many friends that loved her, and to her place in the general work of the Church for which she was so admirably fitted.

Perhaps it should be said here that there are unwritten pages in Miss Blinn's history. She has passed

through some momentous experiences—desperate days that tested to the very core her faith and consecration. Thus it is our Heavenly Father chastens those he loves the most—grinds the hardest His costliest gems, that they may shine with richer and purer luster in the setting for which He has chosen them. He wanted to make a bright star of her, hence this tempest of her life. But after the storms and floods had passed, they left her more closely and rapturously embracing and kissing the Cross, by which, she could truly say, "the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." As she took up her new task, friends could detect in her a new and completer abandonment to her Lord. All those who touched her life became conscious of a new sacredness in her personality and a new power in her message.

In her first message as editor of the *Evangel,* she paid loving tribute to those who preceded her in this work, spoke of their powerful influence for good upon her life, and said: "It is unthinkable that I should follow such as these. As I sat in the sessions of our Board meeting and listened to the appeals of the missionaries from all our fields, I wondered how it would be possible, month by month, so to plan and write that the vision of these many unoccupied villages in America, Africa, China, Japan, Porto Rico, and the Philippines should cause you and our whole Church to determine that there shall be no unoccupied villages in any territory for which United Brethren are responsible. There's only one source of confidence and that is that God doesn't value our talents or lives for what they are in

themselves but for what He can make of them. When He called Simon to be His disciple, He said, 'Thou art Simon, but thou shalt be called Peter.' And He used Peter to bring into the Kingdom in one day three thousand persons and to open the door for the Gospel to the Gentiles. I bring to Him today every small talent, I bring to Him my entire life and purpose. I have no thought but that of glorifying Him. I want to say with David Livingstone, 'I have done nothing for Thee yet, and I would like to do something. Fill me with Thy love now!' And so today I dedicate myself to this work—to help Him realize His expectation of seeing all the kingdoms of the world become His own."

Miss Blinn's thorough college training and her experience in teaching gave her a literary preparation for editorial work which any might covet. Her style was strong, clear, direct, and added to these was soul fervor and intense spiritual purpose. Yet how humbly and unpretentiously she approached her task. After editing her first issue of the paper she declared to intimate friends that she had written everything she knew for that first issue and wondered what she would do when the next issue became due. She had heard somebody say that a flower was made to blossom and a bird to sing, and that a flower must never try to sing nor a bird try to blossom. She laughingly compared her efforts at editorial work to those of a "bird trying to blossom."

J. Hudson Taylor says that all God's giants have been weak men, who did great things for God because they reckoned on His being with them. And so this

young editor, who had so little confidence in herself, had limitless faith in God. She had found a chance to reach with her pen a larger audience than with her voice, and her purpose from the very first was to make every number of the *Evangel* carry a strong, persuasive message to its readers. In her early editorials she pleaded with the women for a deeper abandonment of themselves to Christ, for the giving of themselves to rugged heroism for His sake. "The Cross has won no victories in the hands of sluggish and unbleeding heralds, and Calvary has never told a convincing story through the ministry of frozen hearts," was a challenge she caught up and flung on to the women. "Oh, that God would raise up in our Association," she wrote, "women who would give themselves to praying as they give themselves to nothing else, women who would say, 'This is my work. I will not cease to make mention of the workers in my prayers day and night.' How wonderful it is that God has committed the possibility of such ministry to the lowliest disciple as well as to the most brilliant leaders in the church. The wonderful promises of power were meant no more for David Livingstone than they are meant for you. 'If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.' That is for you. If you will ask, He will send forth laborers; if you will ask, He will loosen purse strings; if you ask, wisdom and power will be given to the missionaries; if you ask, a great harvest of souls will be brought into the Kingdom."

Miss Blinn understood from the first that becoming "Evangel editor" meant a much wider sphere of service than those words would indicate. Almost as soon as she reached the office plans were on foot for field work, and cheerfully, even eagerly, she took up the old line of travel. There were incessant demands for her at branch meetings, annual conferences, state councils, summer conferences, executive committee meetings, board meetings, institutes, and local churches, and wherever she went she spoke with ever-increasing power and effectiveness. Sometimes her editing was done while she was out in field service, taking time between meetings, or in late hours of the night, and then she would send the copy to the office by mail.

In her messages, both written and spoken, Miss Blinn made constant and very effective use of the Scriptures. A woman once told her how greatly a life had been blessed by the Scripture that was used in one of her addresses. After this Miss Blinn studied more than ever to use the "Sword of the Spirit" valiantly. Always disclaiming to be a preacher, she did claim the right to use texts for her talks. She never apologized for anything the Bible said, nor tried to explain away the keen edge of its meaning. The "Word of God" was needed in a "World of God," and "I watch over my Word to perform it," was the promise He had given. She constantly sought to impress upon people the absolute necessity of Bible study to their spiritual growth and development. When women said they had so much to do they did

not have time to read the Bible, her quick reply was, "If you have so much to do that you have no time for the Bible, then you have more to do than God ever intended you to have."

One of Miss Blinn's dearest charms was her unfeigned humility. She seemed equally at home with the rich and poor, the cultured and the uncultured. If there was any preference it might have been for the latter since they perhaps needed her most. She was remarkably free from spiritual pride. Once somebody said to her: "I think you are the most unselfish person I ever knew. Your life has helped me wonderfully in understanding and interpreting the Master." Her reply was, "When you speak of my devotion to my Master it makes me thoroughly ashamed. My life is so full of weaknesses and shortcomings, I should be very happy to think that even a little of the Christ-life in me was an inspiration to anyone else."

She must have known that no person in the Church was more heartily welcomed, or was listened to with greater appreciation than herself. Her addresses were always of a high literary character and laden with a weight of spiritual power, but she resented such allusions to them. An incident that happened at a branch convention is typical of this phase of her character. She had given a very helpful series of devotional talks. Finally one session was thrown open for testimonies and one after another the women rose and began to remark about her and how much her presence had meant to them. She listened rather impatiently for a few minutes then arose and said:

"Friends, this meeting must close unless you praise the Lord for what He has done. If I have done anything at all it was through Him."

One who knew Miss Blinn can hardly cease to wonder how, out of her very busy life, she managed to find so much time for individuals. In the various homes she entered she seemed to take interest in each member of the family. A woman who traveled with her in a series of institutes tells how they were staying one night in a home where a high school student was worrying over his lessons. She offered her help and soon he was having one of the most hilarious hours he ever spent with a Latin lesson. He said, "You have helped me more than anybody I ever studied with before."

Courageous herself, Miss Blinn inspired much of it in others. She seemed to take delight in helping people to discover and develop their own possibilities. At one place she found a pastor facing an almost impossible task with his church. "But you can do it! You are just the one to do it!" she said, "I believe God is going to make you a real leader for these people." "Then what could a person do," said that pastor, "in face of such faith and confidence, but go ahead?"

In a marked way this *Evangel* editor and general church worker came to appreciate the task of the Christian pastor. She was often entertained in United Brethren parsonages and talked over pastors' problems with them sympathetically. Some of them naturally thought that her position and wide field of service

gave her a great advantage over them, but she said: "The thing I dislike about my work is its publicity. It isn't position that makes a man. It often unmakes him. I would be willing to go anywhere; to the middle of Siberia or to the most humble country parish. The strategic place is not in the general work but in the local church." She held Gospel ministers in special regard, and they ranked high on her list of real heroes.

When in Dayton Miss Blinn attended the Euclid Avenue church, and had a class of girls in the Sunday school for whom she felt deep interest. In the spring of 1919, one of the girls of her class fell sick and for nine weeks was obliged to spend most of her time in bed. During all this time her teacher visited her often, bringing flowers and striving to cheer her. At last it was learned that the doctors could do nothing for her and she steadily grew worse. Miss Blinn's days were unusually full at this time, but she had an interview with the girl's physician and learned that the only hope was in sending her to Mayo Brothers in Rochester, Minnesota. Several visits were made to the girl's family, then the case was placed before the Euclid Avenue church and they began to gather funds. In due time the girl was sent. The surgeon's skill, together with the cheering letters and prayers of the church people, restored her and she returned home and was soon well and happy. "And praise is due to the Great Physician," Miss Blinn said to her on her return, "for after all, He is the one who gives those doctors their skill."

It is impossible to write in any adequate way of the varied religious activities of this consecrated and cultured young woman. Many of the leaflets and exercises published by the Literature Committee of the Missionary Association were written by Miss Blinn, though she did not attach her name to them. She was much in demand for conventions and rallies in other denominations, and also for interdenominational work. For two successive years she gave the week of lectures on the current mission study books for the Interdenominational Federation of Missionary Societies of Dayton, succeeding women of wide reputation from Chicago and New York. She was on the general committee of the Chambersburg Summer Conference of Missions, also a member of the program committee of that conference for two years. She represented the United Brethren women on the executive committee of the Council of Women for Home Missions and the Federation of Women's Foreign Mission Boards in New York City. She was a popular speaker among industrial girls at their local and summer conferences, and was as much at home in discussing the problems of girls in industry as in discussing missions.

The marvel is that with all Miss Blinn's other work she was able to keep the *Evangel* to a high standard. The first year of her editorship the circulation increased from 12,300 to 15,000, and the next year to 18,000, thus realizing in two years the goal that had been set for four years. How fully she appreciated the responsibilities of a Christian editor are evidenced

by a quotation from her report at this same Board Meeting: "The *Evangel,* what is it? Only a bundle of sheets of paper and printer's ink? Or is it breathing, full of life—a rich personality bringing to the women of the United Brethren Church this as their holy calling—to give the Water of Life to those who thirst? * * * Every day I have been your editor has brought a clearer understanding of the tremendously difficult and important work you entrusted to me. The *Evangel* during the nearly forty years of its life, has contributed no small part to the remarkable growth and work of our Association. 'It has interested those who ought to be informed, and informed those already interested.' As you contemplate what it means to edit a paper, which must be at once the source of missionary information and inspiration and a magazine which must needs bring such a challenge to the unenlisted as to commend itself to their thought and study and to create in them a passion for the world, for the saving of which our Lord gave His life, you must realize what it means to give to anyone this sacred obligation. On the one hand the world, with all its deep, abysmal need—the world, weary, sinning, and suffering—and on the other Jesus Christ, whose person and teachings are the only remedy.

"I want to say to you here that the two years just past have been the happiest and the richest of my life. I would not exchange them for anything in the world that I can think of. I am overcome as I remember today God's wonderful love and grace to me."

As this faithful editor closed her report at the Scottdale Board meeting, the secretary of literature of Allegheny Branch gave her a happy surprise—thirty-two yards of *Evangel* subscriptions—with these words:

"It is not possible for every girl and woman of Allegheny Branch to be present and hear this splendid report, but they do want you to know that the women of this Branch appreciate the *Evangel* and its editor. We know the hours of toil spent and fervent prayers you have sent up in order that the women may have a paper of which we can be proud. As an expression of appreciation Allegheny Branch is giving you an *Evangel* shower.

"I am happy to present you this roll of new subscribers, a yard for each one of the thirty-two pages the *Evangel* contains. We want each one of these little green slips to represent to you another woman working and praying with you. This is the check covering these subscriptions and with it you receive our love and best wishes."

With this she handed Miss Blinn one hundred and twenty new *Evangel* subscriptions.

* * * * *

Those who have followed Miss Blinn's life and know her disappointment in being baffled and turned back again and again from her chosen field to another

task, will read her own heart's story in the poem which she gave with considerable emotion at the last Board meeting she ever attended:

I knelt at the feet of the Master,
Who knew how my heart burnt with love,
And said, "Let me work in thy service,
And so my devotion I'll prove."

Then I looked on the far waving harvest,
Saw the need of more laborers there,
And I said, "Let me haste to the reaping,
And my sheaves shall be golden and fair."

But he said, "Nay, my child, there are others
Far stronger my reapers to be,
Stay thou still in thy place and be watching
To do some small service for me."

Then I looked on the green sloping hillsides,
There the vineyards in terraces lay,
And the sunshine so balm and so golden,
Made glad the long harvest day.

And I said, "Let me go to the vineyards,
There the clusters hang purple and sweet;
I will gather the choicest and finest,
And will bring all my spoils to thy feet."

But he said, "Nay my child, there are others
To gather the fruit of the vine;
Stay thou still in thy place and be quiet,
Nor thus at thy station repine.

So I looked down the beautiful valley
Where the lilies grew stately and fair,
And the roses blushed scarlet and crimson,
And scented the earth and the air.

And I said, "Let me gather the flowers,
Those flowers so fair and so sweet;
I will bring them in all their bright beauty
And will lay them with love at thy feet."

But he said, "Nay, my child, let the flowers
Grow on in their fragrance and grace,
They are not for thy fingers to gather;
Stay thou content in thy place."

'Twas a dream, but the vision remaineth,
And now in the byways and lanes
I search for the clover and daisies
And glean for the scattering grains.

My sheaves shall be scanty and humble,
All others more stately and good,
But what joy if at nightfall the Master
Shall say, "She hath done what she could."

I THANK THEE

For the daily task, a little too big and a little too hard for my present ability, and for the daily increase of power that comes to meet it.

For the opportunity to give that makes me richer.

For the privilege of service that proves me not worthless in the world.

For the unspeakable honor of working with Thee and meeting some need Thou hast of me—which I cannot understand, but can believe.

For happiness, of which Thou hast given me a generous share; but more for joy, which Thou wouldst not limit, as Thou wouldst not limit obedient and loving service.

For the certainty learned from experience that Thou dost hear and answer the cry of need, and therefore Thou wilt accept the thanksgiving of an eager, grateful heart—dear Lord and Father, I thank Thee.

From Vera Blinn's Notebook

CHAPTER VII

GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION

"I had rather stand
A prophet of my God, with all the thrills
Of trembling, which must shake the heart of one
Who in earth's garments, in this vesture frail
Of flesh and blood, is called to minister
As Seraphs do with fire, than bear the palm
Of any other triumph. This my joy
The Lord fulfilled."

THE guiding principle of those last years of Miss Blinn's life may be briefly summarized in the words of the great missionary apostle, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." She gave herself to Christian service with an abandon that marks the consecration of but few people. All her activity, all her thought, all her planning had to do with the advancement of the cause of Christ. Everything was irrelevant and secondary except as it contributed to the primary purpose of her life. The magnitude of no task staggered her if she believed it was what God wanted done. "What is Christianity for, but to achieve the impossible?" was among her favorite quotations.

Through all her busy days and crowding cares, she made it a rule of her life to go apart each day for Bible study and prayer. This was the secret spring of her overflowing life. Here she searched her own heart in the Holy Spirit's light, and braced her spirit for the conflict.

She always emphasized the necessity of full and complete surrender to God for a life of power and effectiveness in service. She never asked anybody else to do anything she was not willing to do herself. "It is not right," she said, "to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers till you have first given yourself and your own. No person is fit to do real service for the Lord in America or anywhere else till he is willing to go to the heart of Africa or any other place on the face of the earth, if God wants him to go. It is surrender alone which will give us power. We must strip ourselves of reliance on buildings or appropriations or anything else but God. *We must become men and women to whom Christ is the only reality.*"

The ever-widening circle of this young woman's influence constantly baffles and eludes us as we try to follow it. It cannot be bounded by human estimates. To try to put it into words is like trying to gather again the fragrance of a lovely flower that has diffused itself into the atmosphere and gone—only God knows where.

Miss Blinn's advance from the office of *Evangel* editor to that of General Secretary of the Missionary Association was but a natural step in the process of her unfolding life. She took over the full duties of

this office in January, 1920, and served till September 28, during which time she freely poured out the last full measure of her heart's devotion to the work of the Association and to her God.

Desiring to make herself as helpful as possible to the women of the Church, she sent out letters at once to the Branch presidents, the first paragraph of which will show how completely she put herself at their disposal:

"As I take up my duties as Secretary my thoughts and prayers are very much with the faithful women who are the leaders of the work in the various Branches. I want to send you just this word of greeting as we begin our new relationship together, and to ask you to command me for any service I can give in assisting you in the work of your Branch. I am your servant. Will you not be very free at any time to offer suggestions or to point out ways in which our help from headquarters may be more practical? I shall count on you to give us the viewpoint of the women and girls in local societies and chapters in your Branch. We shall greatly appreciate constructive criticism."

The women of the Association looked into the future with unlimited hopes and plans for their work under the leadership of this capable young woman. Her years of service with them had given her a master grip on the whole field of their work. She had already made a place for herself in the heart of the Church, and was everywhere loved and welcomed. She was able to enter in a wonderful way into the work of the

missionaries, both in the home and foreign fields; she gloried in their achievements; she studied their problems, and kept them always wrapped round in the warm folds of her prayers.

Miss Blinn stood foremost among the Church leaders as a promoter of the whole work of the Church. When the United Enlistment Movement was launched with its call for intercessors, life work recruits, tithing stewards, and a consecration and empowerment of the church adequate to its great task, she saw in it hope for the realization of her vision and threw herself into it with conviction and enthusiasm. Out of her busy life she gladly gave months of time to the promotion of this movement in colleges, institutes, conventions, and in local churches, where she helped scores of pastors to reach their goals. She challenged the women of the Church to herioc cooperation with the men in realizing these larger aims, and in a published message to them she said:

"The responsibility of evangelizing the world is too heavy for women's shoulders to bear alone. The Master told Mary to bear the news to His disciples that He had risen, but it was to eleven men with their big strong hands and hearts that He said, 'Go and make disciples of all nations * * *' The faith and vision of the women plus the statesmanship and vigor of the men, are now beginning to accomplish what neither could achieve alone. This is the day for which we long have prayed. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. But let us do more than that. Let us faithfully and gloriously lift our share of the burden as women mem-

bers of our churches. Now is our opportunity to make good our boastings of the past and to demonstrate the truth of our claim, that the Women's Missionary Association makes good, faithful church members."

Miss Blinn had attractive social qualities and loved to mingle with people and work with them. Somewhere among her notes she wrote, "Jesus loved society—loved to be with people. We are most like Jesus when we are most human—when we love to be with people." Miss Blinn loved people, rich or poor, old or young, black or white, yellow or brown. She was always generous in her judgment of others. She could not harbor ill will toward any living being. If she was ever treated with disregard she was inclined to look for the blame in herself. Once when she was made to suffer almost beyond endurance by one she had counted her friend, she attributed it to some lack of adjustment, or perhaps some bit of selfishness on her own part, and said:

"Self is dying, slowly dying,
Oh, the pain that it does cost."

Did she have no faults? Of course she had them, for she was only human. She would have said that she had more than almost anybody else. The way of life was far from smooth for her. She was abundantly acquainted with hardships and trials, the kind that try the souls of men and women. She had moods of discouragement and despondency as well as

others, but she did not let them overcome and crush her. She went straight on in spite of them.

In her work she found pleasure and exhilaration. Everywhere she went people eagerly sought draughts of the inspiration she could bring them, and she gave lavishly of all the best that God had given her. To consider and spare herself was not one of Miss Blinn's instincts. "I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work," was the impelling force that drove her on. "Swift responsiveness with a kind of spendthrift generosity has ever been the beauty of admirable women." These habits of whole-hearted devotion were at once her "glory and her danger." Her outgoing spirit exposed her continually to excessive strain.

With comparatively good health she pursued her work throughout the winter of 1920. In the spring she attended a number of Branch meetings. In her closing talk at one of the large Branch conventions, she said: "Women, we shall never all be together again as we are today. When your Branch meets next year some one of us will be missing. It may be you. It may be I." But nobody imagined as they looked into her earnest face that day, that it would be she—so young, so apparently healthy, so full of promise for years to come. Nobody dreamed that at that very hour an unsuspected disease had begun its deadly work upon her physical frame.

In response to an urgent call from the Pacific Coast it was decided that Miss Blinn should spend the summer months among the churches of Washington,

Oregon, and California. This was new territory for her, and everything was full of intense interest. She spoke in a number of churches where they had never heard a missionary address before. Writing of a service in Oregon, she said: "My audience was made up of big, husky ranchmen. One of them came to me after the meeting and said, 'I never saw things just this way before; you have lifted us to a higher plane.' We organized a missionary society there."

A record in her journal says: "The president of the Oregon Branch is traveling with me thus far. Just now we are in the beautiful Willamette Valley, and just in fruit season. How I enjoy it! Everyone is good to me. They all act as if they were glad to have me out here." Another place the journal reads: "Greatest day of my itinerary thus far. Praise the Lord for His blessings! Nearly all my audience were young people. Five young men in one group marched right up to the front seat. I never saw finer young people in my life. We asked only for a basket offering, but they pledged a hundred dollars to be paid through the local treasurer of the Women's Missionary Association. Every parent stood, willing to let their children go anywhere. Then forty young people, mostly young men, stood up saying they would obey the voice of God no matter where it called. One woman rejoiced that the five of her seven children who were there stood up. This church has had no pastor for four years."

Sometimes friends took Miss Blinn for a day's outing, and this she enjoyed to the full. The climate,

the fruit, the ocean, all delighted her. "We had a day off at the beach," she wrote in her journal; "I had a dip in the ocean, buried myself in the sand, and was as care-free as a child. It was a quiet, secluded spot, and how we did rest! I got a good dose of sunburn, but I feel good. Physically I am like a new person—so much better than when I left the office. I sleep well and you should see how I eat—especially cherries! I am in love with this country. I am happy in service. What more could I want?" In some of her letters she spoke of it as being the greatest trip of all her life. One day she visited in the home of the aged Bishop and Mrs. Castle, and her hours with them were like a divine benediction to her life. Among other things the Bishop said to her, "You are living up to your name, *Vera. God has given you the highest honor—that of sowing the Word." Then after he had expounded the two parables of the sower, she said: "We clasped hands in prayer and Bishop Castle prayed for me, unworthy as I am, that, wherever I go, I might leave behind me a broad stretch of land over which the good seed—the Word of God—has been sown."

On her way home from the Pacific Coast, she improved this, her first opportunity, to visit the Grand Canyon in Arizona. She stopped a few days at Wichita, Kansas, to visit the home folks and used this time to help her mother rearrange her little home following the marriage of the brother, Paul. The home folks! How she had always loved them! The diffi-

*True

THE FOUR NIECES
ESTHER, RUTH, RACHAEL AND MARY BURKETT

culties they had met and conquered together in earlier life had served to strengthen even these dearest of human ties, and wherever she traveled thoughts of "mamma and Paul and Bertha and her family" were always with her. By this time her sister had quite a family of her own. Miss Blinn could never forget the thrill that came to her years ago, when for the first time she heard that she had a niece, and how friends had joked her about shouting down the rain barrel to see how it would sound to be called "Auntie." Three more such thrills had come to her in the years since passed, and now she had four bright, beautiful nieces, Esther, Ruth, Rachael, and Mary, whom she loved as if they had been her own daughters. These nieces always followed their Aunt Vera with their heart interest and their prayers, and she always made it a point to spend Christmas holidays with them and "mother." The last Christmas season when she was in Wichita she had spoken in her brother-in-law's church, and at the close of her address the greatest thrill of all had come as her second niece, Ruth, had run to her and throwing her arms about her neck, had said, "Aunt Vera, I am surely going to be a missionary."

On this visit to Wichita she spoke again in the Waco Avenue Church. It was the last address she ever gave. Before leaving the city she organized a Missionary Society among the women of that church. It also was her last.

ON ANY MORNING

Think of
Stepping on shore and finding it heaven!
Of taking hold of a hand and finding it God's hand;
Of breathing a new air and finding it Celestial air;
Of feeling invigorated and finding it immortality;
Of passing from storm and tempest to an unknown calm;
Of waking up and finding it home!

From Vera Blinn's Note Book

CHAPTER VIII

HER CROWNING

Death came to Vera Blinn with bewildering swiftness. When she returned from the Pacific Coast to Dayton, she gave to the Trustees of the Women's Missionary Association a long, enthusiastic report of her trip. She suggested plans for the further development of the work, and expressed deepened conviction that the greatest need on the coast was for more trained and consecrated workers.

She looked thin and worn, and friends felt deep concern and insisted that she consult a physician. She finally did so, and then learned with certainty, what she had but very recently begun to suspect—that she was a victim of diabetes. She was immediately released from her duties, and it was hoped that with complete rest and heroic medical treatment she might be restored. On Saturday night, September 25, she suddenly collapsed and took her bed. Her condition soon roused grave fears, and her mother was summoned. Telegrams were sent to the Trustees of the Missionary Association, Branch presidents, and other friends, calling them to prayer. On Sunday morning Doctor and Mrs. S. D. Faust reluctantly consented to her being taken from their home to the hospital where,

the physicians claimed, better treatment could be given her. Many of the United Brethren churches of Dayton gave themselves to prayer in her behalf at the morning services. All that medical skill and the loving care of nurses and friends could do, was done to save her, but God was calling her to sublimer service.

It was during one of those nights at the hospital, when earthly things were fast receding and things eternal coming into view, that she seemed to glimpse the consummation of her life's dedication, for she repeated again and again with animation, "A new heaven and a new earth."

She lingered for a couple of days in a semi-conscious state. When Tuesday morning dawned, the lamp of her life had burned out; the arms of Love had gathered her in.

"Now fair on earth
The new day breaketh—but a sweeter dawn
Hath visited our sister's weary heart,
And in its light she sleepeth. For behold!
The silver cord was broken in the night,
And the loosened soul has found its rest in God."

That same morning her mother and sister arrived from Kansas, too late to say good-bye. Four hours before their arrival she had gone into the city of her everlasting possessions.

Miss Blinn died Tuesday, September 28, 1920. On Wednesday her body lay in state for several hours in the Euclid Avenue Church, and in the afternoon a

simple funeral service was held. Her Sunday-school class attended in a body. The Trustees of the Women's Missionary Association, all clad in white, stood by the casket. A host of people, general officers, seminary professors, students, and friends, gathered to pay their last tributes to one of the best yoke-fellows they ever had. Her pastor, Reverend F. L. Dennis, of Euclid Avenue Church, had charge of the service. Doctor O. T. Deever and Doctor S. D. Faust led in devotions. The hymns were her favorites, "He Leadeth Me," "Crossing the Bar," and "Open the Gates of the Temple." Mrs. S. S. Hough, representing the Women's Missionary Association, gave a sketch of her life and work; Bishop A. T. Howard, representing the Foreign Missionary Society, spoke on "Her Influence on the Denomination"; Doctor P. M. Camp, Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, spoke on "Her Life a Challenge to Deeper Consecration"; her pastor, Reverend F. L. Dennis, concluded with brief remarks. A spirit of triumph and victory pervaded the whole service. The spirit-deserted body, lying there all in white and surrounded with masses of beautiful flowers, did not seem to be hers. Her great soul had gone,

"Leaving the outgrown shell by
life's unresting sea."

Friends started that evening with all that was mortal of Vera Blinn for the last, long journey west.

The following Saturday morning the final services were held in the Waco Avenue Church, in Wichita,

Kansas, where Miss Blinn's brother-in-law, Rev. J. W. Burkett, is pastor. Reverend C. E. Heisel was in charge and read the Scripture. Reverend A. L. Deever, a college classmate, offered prayer. The hymn, "Ivory Palaces," was given by the choir. Mrs. S. S. Hough, Chairman of the Trustees of the Women's Missionary Association, gave a sketch of her life. Miss Elsie Hall, Secretary of the Otterbein Guild, spoke of her influence upon the lives of the young people of the Church. Reverend C. V. Priddle, a life-long friend of the Blinn family, told of her work for the denomination. Reverend L. F. John, pastor of the church at York, Nebraska, spoke concerning the power she had been in that local church while a teacher in college and later in high school. Dean W. S. Reese, of Kansas City University, brought a comforting message from John 11:25,26. "I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." The spirit of the entire service reflected the truth of these words of the Master of Life, and proclaimed that Miss Blinn is not dead. She lives! In larger life, unfettered, free, she lives! "To be with Christ is far better." One present at this service said: "How impressive it was! The radiance of her life seemed to dispel the sadness of her death. Those two representatives of the Missionary Association, Miss Elsie Hall and Miss Florence Clippinger, who, clad in white, stood so reverently, one at the head and the other at the foot of the bier, reminded us of the angels in Joseph's tomb—types of the invisible

watchers who guard the dust of those who sleep in Christ till He gathers it again in the resurrection morning.

Directly behind the altar in the large window, was the emblem of the Cross. Through it came the light that fell upon the beautiful white casket that held the earth house of one who had exalted the Cross in all her messages and bore its marks in her life.

Out on the Kansas plains they made her grave, near the little white Pleasant Valley church, close by the side of her sainted father. Over this grave, as over every grave of God's precious dead, may be inscribed heaven's epitaph, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

What Miss Blinn's work is in this new sphere to which she has gone we do not know, nor what part she may still have in earth's tasks. It is easy for us to believe that the "great cloud of witnesses," by whom we are surrounded, may be permitted to do more than merely witness the efforts of those engaged in the same tasks which were so shortly before their own. One of the speakers at the funeral suggested that since the one great work of our Lord is intercession at God's right hand, perhaps those who have learned so well how to share this blessed ministry with him on earth may still be permitted to share it in a larger way with him in heaven. One thing we know, to one who lived as Miss Blinn lived "death is gain," and with Christ she lives today a crowned soul.

Miss Blinn still lives in those whose lives she touched while on earth. The words she spoke are repeated today in a thousand echoes through the hearts of those who heard her. "Her soul is marching on." Were all those blest by her ministry, and who now form a part of her "joy and her crown of rejoicing," to bring a tribute to her memory they would fill books. From north, east, south and west these tributes have come, from bishops, general church officers, missionaries, evangelists, pastors, college professors and students, from men, women, and girls, all showing the large way she still lives in the hearts of the people of the Church. Some of these tributes are here given:

"She is 'home first' but left a mighty impression for Christ and His kingdom." "Her life of devotion will ever linger round us, and every woman in our circle is better by her coming to us." "Her life was dominated by first things, and invested in a way that will count through eternity." "I could not escape from her words. They burned themselves into my very soul until I was led to make a glad surrender." "She was one of the means used to lead my daughter to pledge herself as a life recruit." "What a true and faithful witness she was for her Christ!" "Oh, how she did love Jesus, her glorious Lord! With what holy abandon she gave every vestige of her body and mind to Him!" "I have watched her life and it has changed mine." "She came into our home and instantly we loved her, from the youngest to the eldest." "She made a deep impression on me, and I determined to live a consecrated life—that deeper life in Christ

Jesus." "She was one of the most powerful women in public address I ever heard." "Heaven is richer because of her entrance, earth poorer." "I shall never forget her cheery 'good-bye' and best wishes when she started me on my way to China." "We who were at the Chambersburg School of Missions those two summers she was there will never forget the devotional hours she spent with us under the United Brethren banner just before bedtime. There is reason to believe that some life decisions were made there." "She took the whole world's needs into her heart." "She was a wise, safe counselor to her pastor and his family. In the pew she was an inspirer to better preaching." "The one sentence I most remember in her letters to me were, 'Hold me tight with prayer.'" "Her address at the first Branch convention I ever attended was one thing that led me to volunteer." "Hers was a religion with a smile." "More beautiful and enduring than any monument of stone or founding of institutions will be the glad response of the multiudes she has thrilled with voice and pen." "She has gone but her light will always shine through the lives of many she has blessed."

Bishop A. T. Howard, illustrating the influence of her life, said at her funeral: "The corn of wheat, or the human Christian spirit, in that experience we call death into which it ventures is simply allying itself with great new friendly forces which steadfastly protect the inner core of vital being and lead it through the hour of so-called death into the miracle of multiplied and multiplying life."

Doctor P. M. Camp said at the funeral: "Her life was noble in purpose and in devotion to that purpose. She followed in the footsteps of the Man of Calvary, who set His life to righteousness at all cost, turned His back to all ease and comfort of life, and with an immortal faith in God, gave His life to save a sinful world. Her life goes on eternally enlarging."

Mrs. L. R. Harford, President of the Women's Missionary Association, wrote: "'Everywhere her voice was heard it rang true in loyalty to Jesus Christ. She was the glad, willing bond-servant of Jehovah. For our future workers, at home and abroad, I crave such utter abandonment of self, such dedication of every power to the cause of the Kingdom as Miss Blinn advocated and exemplified."

A woman of another denomination says: "We never thought of her as belonging to any one denomination. She seemed to belong to us all."

The Council of the Federated Missionary Societies of Dayton wrote: "We feel our loss most keenly, and know that we must always be a little better because of our contact with this unselfish and beautifully consecrated young woman."

Miss Blinn's mother said: "Since she has gone I realize that she belonged first to the Lord, then to the Church and last of all to us."

From a friend is this testimony: "God was graciously good to bring me in touch with such a heavenly life before He took her from us. I understand better now the relative value of things heavenly and things earthly. No more can things of

a material nature have much attraction for me, only as they may be used to further the interests of the spiritual life."

The deaconess of the Euclid Avenue Church relates this experience: "Her life seemed so perfect and beautiful in every way, but there is one thing that stands out, perhaps because found in so few of us, her dislike of gossip and her freedom from criticism. She was so just always. I shall never forget a lesson I learned one evening when we, with other friends, were discussing certain phases of church work. Some adverse criticism was made, and I made one remark, whereupon Miss Blinn exclaimed, 'Oh, Ella'! I said no more but sat thinking how uncharitable I had been, and resolved never again to merit a like rebuke."

A professor in York College: "Mary poured out the precious box of ointment upon the head of her Lord. The spirit of the world sneered and said, 'What a waste!' but Jesus said, 'She hath wrought a good work upon me.' Miss Blinn, too, poured out her precious box of ointment, her very life, at her Master's feet. The world still says, 'What a waste! What a waste of brilliant intellect, of keen perception, of wonderful memory, of prodigious energy, of boundless enthusiasm, of untiring effort! What a waste!' But Jesus would say, 'Wherever the feet of them that bring good tidings go forth beautiful upon the mountains, the influence and inspiration of Miss Blinn's life will go too, and will be felt wherever the gospel is preached.'"

A pastor: "I cannot think of her as other than being interested and helping in the same way she did here to further the interests of the Kingdom, only now in a far greater capacity and larger sphere. What seemed to us a cutting off of her work here must have been only a release for larger activity and larger service. So she is really our co-worker today."

A Pennsylvania school teacher: "I shall never cease to think of Miss Blinn as my ideal Christian. Just a little more than a year ago I first heard her. Oh, the wonderful message that came to us that night! Her text was, 'Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?' As long as I live I shall have before me the picture of her standing on the pulpit and pleading, as I have never heard before nor since, for an entire consecration of our lives to the Lord. I have talked of Miss Blinn to my Juniors, my Sunday-school class, to the Christian Endeavor, to the members of the Missionary Society, and to the Guild girls. There was one girl in our crowd who was not a Christian, but shortly after hearing Miss Blinn she said, 'Well, she had an influence on me, for I read my Bible that night, which I hadn't done for ever so long.' We girls coveted this girl for the Kingdom and we all prayed for her and a little later she was wondrously saved and has since become our Otterbein Guild president. Oh, why can't we have more flaming evangels like Miss Blinn?"

Doctor and Mrs. S. D. Faust, with whom Miss Blinn made her home in Dayton: "In our home she seemed like an angel of light. She did not 'make herself one of the family'; she just naturally became one

of us. Her rare qualities and her judicious use of them made us feel toward her as if she were our own daughter. And so it seemed altogether fitting when she often called us 'father' and 'mother.' When at leisure, she sat with us through the evening hours, and at the time of family worship often asked, 'Is it my turn?' She often came into the kitchen, saying, 'Is there anything I can do?' She offered that comradeship which made her presence with us an unceasing joy. Do you wonder that we loved her? And she lived the life she professed. When out of her private room, is was her custom to let the door stand wide open. If you cared to look into the room, everything presented itself in perfect order. But upon her reading table almost always lay her open Bible, and beside it a small volume of comments upon the 'daily readings.' She kept the 'morning watch,' and often talked about the readings. Great heart! Great soul! One early morning she slipped away from us without saying good-bye. But our memory of her is like the fragrance of some paradise."

Just here let us take one glimpse into the life of Miss Blinn's only brother, Paul. For some years he lived a nominal Christian life. Burned into his memory will ever be the experience of that afternoon of September 28, when he was called to the telephone and, like a flash out of a clear sky, came the words of the telegram, "Vera has gone to her crowning." Dazed, bewildered, sleepless, he lay that whole night, his heart hard, bitter and rebellious against a fate that could wrench his sister from him at such an early age.

But before the dawning a voice from heaven spoke to him, and something long dead in his soul came to life. From that hour his life was changed. He began to read his long-neglected Bible and felt a growing conviction that God was claiming him for definite service.

One Sunday morning in December there was an impressive service in the Waco Avenue Church, in Wichita. There before the altar, on the very spot where the white casket had rested less than three months before, stood Paul Blinn, with his face toward the great cross in the window, publicly pledging his life in holy service to God. Close by his side stood his young wife, and with them six others. Two of these were Miss Blinn's own loved nieces, Ruth and Rachael Burkett, who, with tears streaming over their cheeks, offered their young lives, too, for the Lord's white harvest fields.

Paul feels himself unworthy and unfit for his great task, but Vera's influence holds him and the voice of his father seems to be calling him across the years to come and follow. He was principal of a high school when granted a license to preach the gospel, and will take special training for Christian work. After that, he is ready for service either in the home or foreign field as providence shall direct.

And so it seems that "after many days" the father's wish is to be realized for his "preacher boy."

The need of "reapers" was one of the last burdens on Miss Blinn's heart. It was one of the needs she last urged upon the Church with irresistible conviction. "The one thing that impresses me above everything

else is the tremendous need of men," she wrote in one of her letters from the Pacific Coast. Strong men, thoroughly trained, were her ideals—men of unquenchable faith, men willing to give all there is of them to God. In view of this fact the endowment of a "Chair of Missions" in the Bonebrake Theological Seminary, by the Women's Missionary Association, is a most fitting tribute to her memory. The Jubilee Memorial fund of the Association is designated for this purpose.

Miss Blinn's life is an example of how a little given to God may be increased under His holy touch. He took the life she gave Him, and, like the loaves and fishes, He blest it and brake it and with it fed the multitudes—literally fed multitudes.

The great evangelist, D. L. Moody, once said that the world has not yet seen what God can do through a life completely consecrated to Him. In Miss Blinn we have a very satisfying illustration of His working through a life placed completely at His disposal. She literally burned out for Him. She had meant it, with all her heart she had meant it, when in earlier years she had marked those words in her Bible, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." In her much used note book she had written and underscored the words, *"What is more blessed than to lay down life for God?"* And on another page, *"Consecration may involve incessant service and it may involve blood-red service, but through that sacrifice God will be made known. This is the meaning of the Cross."* Her whole life of service showed that she had learned fel-

lowship with Christ in the experiences of His cross for the redemption of the world. Her whole challenge to others was in the spirit of our Lord's own call, "Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."

We are wont to sigh when a young saint dies and say, "What a pity that she lived out only half her years." Have we forgotten that our Master's own life covered but thirty-three years of earth's time?

"We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial.
We should count time by heart throbs. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best."

Miss Blinn's life was short only in years. She crowded more of real living into thirty years than most people do into sixty years. She must have realized deeply the meaning of those words she wrote among her notes, "It is nothing to die, it is dreadful not to live." How wonderfully she lived! How wonderfully she still lives! Such a life of whole-hearted service, of such passionate love for her Lord, carries with it as sure as God is Love, the promise of an abundant harvest when God has given "the increase."

We say Miss Blinn's work is done. Shall we not rather say her work has just begun? Life is only a time of seed sowing. It is God that "giveth the increase." "Their works do follow them," is the promise given to the Apocalyptic seer, and the works

that follow are often more and greater than those ever wrought in life. The power of any consecrated life is set in the eternal power and plan of God. It cannot die.

"So long as man shall live and die in Him,
They, living in Him, die but to toil and tears.
They, dying in Him, to undreamed glories live
That shall outlast the stars.

"And one saw her walking close with Him
In festal robes beyond the sunrise fair
And dowered with the beauty of her Lord.
And thus He led her up the smiling streets
Thronged for her triumph, to the sapphire throne,
To bring her to the presence of the King.
And all the holy ones who bade her hail
Said, 'Blessed are the dead in whom He died!
They died and live in Him forevermore;
From all their toils for Him they rest in Him,
And all their works for Him do follow them.'

"And one who heard and saw was comforted."

"O grant us love like Thine,
That hears the cry of sorrow
From heathendom ascending to the throne of God;
That spurns the call of ease and home
While Christ's lost sheep in darkness roam.

"O grant us hearts like Thine,
Wise, tender, faithful, childlike,
That seek no more their own, but live to do Thy will!
The hearts that seek Thy Kingdom first,
Nor linger while the people thirst.

"O grant us minds like Thine,
That compassed all the nations;
That swept o'er land and sea and loved the least of all;
Great things attempting for the Lord,
Expecting mighty things from God."

CALLING OUT RECRUITS

A characteristic address by Miss Blinn.

"Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."—Ephesians 3:7-9.

"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.'

"So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost departed."—Acts 13:2, 4.

JUST AS we enter upon the reconstruction era, when all the world is looking to America, it is especially fitting that the church of Christ should sound the recruiting call for the ministry of the Gospel at home and abroad. A very large share of the responsibility of setting the world into a new mold is committed by other nations to America and to the Christian Church of America. How fitting it is, then, that in this third great crisis through which the United States is passing, we should

pray that God shall give us men and women filled with the Holy Spirit, men and women chosen of Him who shall speak for the American people and lead them in the supreme endeavor of this hour. And not only should we pray that God will call out these men and women, but we should also pray that He will show us our part as individuals in creating such an atmosphere as that the young people, who are called by the Holy Spirit, may hear and obey that call.

The call to the Christian ministry is a call to one of the heroic professions. There were brave men at Marathon, at Waterloo, at Gettysburg, and at the Marne. The men who have fought the battles of our civilization on land and sea, under the sea and in the air, were heroes, and their names are among the immortals, but they did not monopolize nor exhaust the heroism of the human race. The greatest man and preacher that ever lived was told that in every city bonds and afflictions awaited him. The Master called him into His service by saying, "I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake." Saul of Tarsus was stoned, he was shipwrecked, he was imprisoned, he was hungry and thirsty and cold, and yet to a young minister, his son in the gospel, he wrote, "Suffer hardship with me as a good soldier of Christ Jesus."

Read again the story of how Europe was won to Christianity. Surely there are no greater names in the galaxy of heroes than Augustine, Boniface, Luther, and Knox. When Boniface was an old man and an

archbishop, he heard of a remote tribe that had not been reached. Resigning his office and honors, he went out to win that savage tribe to Christ. As he did not expect to return, he put a shroud among his clothing. True to his premonitions, he fell at the hands of those he had gone to save.

Although John Wesley did his preaching in England, the wonderful revivals which spread over that country as the result of his efforts are felt in America even unto this day. When he died, he left no wealth—only four silver spoons and a well-worn surplice. At his funeral there was no hearse, no coach. He was carried to his grave by poor men, and yet this man in whose heart the Gospel of his Lord was as a flaming fire was beaten and pelted with stones and more than once barely escaped with his life.

The men who preached the Gospel in America in pioneer times were heroes. Among these are the names of our own Christian Newcomer, Jacob Resler, John C. Bright, and many others. Christian Newcomer crossed the Allegheny mountains thirty-eight times—not in a Pullman palace car, but riding in the saddle, wading through swamps, fording streams, declaring to those to whom he went the unsearchable riches of Christ.

Tens of thousands of men of whom the world has no record lived heroic lives in the ministry of the gospel of the Son of God. They walked in His footsteps, accepted His principles and program, and called upon the people to live soberly and righteously and

godly in this present world. *It is because of their lives and ministry that mankind in its march has not fainted, and fallen, and died.*

The call to the Christian ministry is the call to preach a Gospel that has demonstrated its power. If Livingstone should come back to earth today, he could go to Zanzibar and stand there in the great cathedral seating two thousand Christians, preaching from a pulpit standing over the very spot where during his lifetime Arab slave traders whipped and sold their black-skinned victims.

Henry Martyn went to India in 1806. British sea captains had been ordered to land no more missionaries in the country. He retired to his famous little pagoda, twelve miles from the Ganges, where he translated the New Testament into Bengali. He could not gain a hearing from the Brahmans. At last his faith failed him, and, moving on to Persia, he declared he would as soon expect to see a dead man raised to life as a Brahman to become a Christian. Recently in *that same pagoda* was held a meeting of native Indian Christian leaders from all parts of the empire, Brahmans, Mohammedans, and low castes, who devoted themselves afresh to Henry Martyn's Master and theirs, for the carrying of the Gospel to the unreached parts of India.

China thought it had crushed out the "foreign superstition" in 1900. The streets of Pao-ting-fu ran with blood. Horace Pitkin, the martyr of Yale, died in the Boxer uprising, and his head was nailed to the city arch. Recently Sherwood Eddy held a great meeting

there, where two thousand people, including the officials of the city, gathered to hear America's ambassador of Christ. A thousand were turned away. The arch was covered with Christian mottoes. Although Mr. Eddy told them that following Christ might mean to them some day what it had meant to Pitkin, one hundred men confessed and enrolled themselves as Christians. We are called to serve in a winning cause.

All the men of whom we have spoken were heroes because they were men of conviction. If we would today produce men and women of conviction, the home, the school, and the church must foster the ideals and verities of the Christian faith. "A man cannot be the herald of a passion he has not himself experienced."

These new recruits of ours must go out to the world themselves to speak with the authority of a divine message and of a spiritual experience based on the Word.

A wonderful responsibiliy is placed here upon the womanhood of our Church, particularly upon the women who are mothers and sisters in the home. It is very easy by some expression of criticism or doubt to keep young men or women from hearing the call of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not compel men to do His service. He woos, but He never forces. If the conversation in the home is preeminently along the line of social ambition and money-making, how difficult it is for the one who is called of the Holy Spirit to hear and to obey that call! Would that our

women everywhere might realize that it is a sin against the Holy Spirit to turn aside in any way one who is called of God to His service. A seed that is planted in the ground may be a perfect seed, but it will not grow unless the soil and the atmospheric conditions contribute to its growth. May we think of the call of the Holy Spirit as the seed which He plants in the hearts of those whom He calls. That seed cannot grow unless you and I do our part to prepare the soil in which it is to grow.

Many of you have heard of Martha Campbell, a young teacher in a country school in Ohio. She had wanted to be a missionary herself, and so when later six children came to her home she consecrated those little lives to God. Instead of yielding to the temptation which poverty makes to many such mothers to take their children from school, this mother saw to it that five of her boys and girls completed the course at the University of Wooster, at Wooster, Ohio, the youngest one having to drop out because of poor health. If this mother, Martha Campbell White, should today have a family reunion, there would come to her home one daughter, Mrs. C. R. Compton, who, with her husband, spent years in frontier home mission service in Nebraska and Montana; Mrs. John R. Mott, whose husband has left his influence upon the students and Christian leaders of the entire world; another daughter, Mrs. W. R. Stewart, who is preaching the gospel in China with her husband; one son, Dr. W. W. White, the founder of the Bible Teachers' Training School in New York; and another son, J. Campbell

White, who gave years of his life to missionary service in India, and who now is devoting his life to the securing of trained missionary leadership in this country. This little mother never addressed an audience in her life, and yet she has literally gone into all the world.

About a year ago I was in a certain city in the east attending a service one evening in a Lutheran church. At the close of the service, the pastor's wife took my friend and me through that magnificent new church building. As we came out at the front entrance, we noticed a beautiful electrolier on either side. "Would you like to know the story of those two lights?" she said to us. "When the church was completed I saw the need of having some lights at the entrance, and I told my husband I wanted to earn the money myself to provide them. You see, I have two children, a little boy and a little girl. When the little boy plays about the house he invariably plays that he is a doctor, and so I have said to him: 'Mother hopes you will be a doctor some day, and mother will help to earn the money to send you to college and then to the medical university, but there are millions and millions of people in China, Africa, and India who haven't any doctor to go to when they get sick. Mother hopes you will be a doctor and go to care for these people who haven't anybody else to give them medicine.' When my little girl plays about the house, she always plays that she's a school teacher; and so I said to her: 'Mother hopes you will be a school teacher some day, and mother will help you get an education, but there are lots of little boys and girls in the mountains and

in the cities of America, and millions of them in Africa and China and India who never can go to school at all unless somebody goes to teach them, and so mother hopes that you will be a teacher to these boys and girls who haven't anybody else to teach them.' Now, this mother said to us, I put these two lights out here for my boy and my girl, and I said to them: 'Mother put these two lights in front of the church because she wants you to be shining lights in the world. When you grow up, if you have not done the thing that you know mother wanted you to do, you will be sorry as you look at these lights, but if you have done what you know mother wanted you to do you will be happy, and you will know that you are mother's two shining lights.'" See the atmosphere that that mother is creating in her home.

Not only in the home but in the local church to which we belong must we help to create this proper atmosphere. Is our Christianity vital or formal? A cold, dead church will never produce ministers or missionaries. I know of churches in our denomination that in all of their history have never given one single recruit to the ministry or to the mission field. I know of other churches which are content today with the recruits they gave to the ministry and the mission field fifteen or twenty years ago. How many young men and young women has your church sent into the ministry and mission field within the last five or ten years? Is your church the kind of a church that will produce ministers and missionaries? Is your church the kind of a church that makes it easy for your young

men and young women to answer the call of God? I know of a church in another denomination that has not failed once during the last twelve years to give at least one recruit a year to the ministry of that denomination. Have we ourselves such abounding and overflowing experience of Christ that we can send out a rich new stream of the water of life into the dry and thirsty places of the world?

Spurgeon once said, "I should not like for you to die a millionaire, if God meant you to be a missionary. I should not like it, were you fitted to work in the slums, that you should be a mere king. What are all your kings, all your nobles, all your diadems, when you put them together, compared with the dignity of winning souls for Jesus Christ?"

"Oh, for a passionate passion for souls!
Oh, for a pity that yearns!
Oh, for the love that loves unto death!
Oh, for the fire that burns"!

"Oh, for the power that prevails,
That pours out itself for the lost,
Victorious power in the Conqueror's name,
The Lord of Pentecost."

Paul's life motive was not born of humanitarianism, not born of political or social expediency. Neither was it born of any belief in his personal ability or fitness. He said he was not worthy to become an apostle, the least of all saints and chief of sinners. His motive

was begotten of a supernatural experience. On the way to Damascus he saw the Crucified. His glorious deity flashed on him in all its mighty and compelling power, and Paul had a revelation of what he owed to One who loved him and gave Himself for him. Not debtor because the Jews or Greeks had done anything for him. He had a sense of debt that piled up before the Cross. How it piles up there!

Not long ago I read of a Chinese Christian, a son of Christian parents. His father and mother and brother and sister were killed in the Boxer outbreak rather than deny their faith. He escaped and came to America for five years, receiving his Ph.D. from one of our eastern universities. When he returned to China, he had to choose between using foreign education in a business way to make a fortune for himself or for Christian service at a meager salary. He chose the latter. When some one asked him his reason, he said: "My reason is the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and the first verse of the twelfth chapter. I feel that in that crowd of witnesses are my father and mother saying, 'There is our son; he is running a good race.' How could I live my life selfishly when they are watching me?" This same choice is before us all today. Paul and all the other heroes of the faith, together with our missionaries who have laid down their lives, are in that crowd of witnesses. They are watching us. How can we live our lives selfishly?

"In the Cross of Christ I glory,
Tow'ring o'er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

THE UNTOUCHED CROSS

An address (abridged) given by Miss Blinn just before the close of the World War.

I HAVE lately read a book with a thrilling story entitled "The Untouched Cross." It tells of a certain village on the battle front in France that had been torn to pieces with shells. A man went to this shattered village to visit the survivors and to arrange for a Christian service with them. He turned toward the ruined church which for three centuries had stood, but now bowed its head before the fiery blast of war. The outside walls were pitted with shrapnel and the windows blown to fragments. The grave stones were shattered by shells. He found he could not enter by the front door, so climbed over heaps of stones and rubbish to the side entrance. What a ghastly sight met his eyes! The roof had fallen through, the floor could not be seen, figures of saints had been blown to fragments. Nothing had escaped. He walked around three parts of the church and looked at the rubbish on the floor, then he lifted his eyes and saw a sight which startled him. There before him stood a large wooden cross against the wall, bearing a life-sized figure of the Savior, perfectly intact—the only thing in the church undamaged and untouched. Altar gone, saints gone, roof and windows gone, chairs gone—all gone save

Jesus only. The worshippers had fled but He remained; the church in ruins but He untouched. It was an awesome sight amid that scene of desolation. Amid the fiery blasts of bullets He had remained, with arms outstretched, interceding with God for a ruined world. Not a bullet had touched Him. Amid the hail of shells and falling masonry nothing had touched Him. The clock in the steeple was still. It was a symbol of time and things earthly, and the shells had destroyed it. The crucifix was the symbol of the eternal, the undying love which no shell can touch.

When the villagers returned to their desolate abode they would have nothing left but the Cross. It alone had borne the blast. It alone was there to give them welcome. Their homes were in ruins, their fields laid waste, even their church and the burial place of their dead were in ruins. But the Cross was left and two arms outstretched still to bid them welcome.

Like that blasted village and ruined church, the world of our thought and feeling lies a heap of ruins at our feet. The mark of the shell is on everything. In the midst of our fallen civilization the Cross alone stands untouched. Christ stands, in the midst of the fiery blast, with outstretched arms calling the stricken people to the shelter of His love. There is room for all the world between those arms. For broken business men, bereaved parents, lonely maidens, fatherless children, there is shelter and solace for all beneath the shadow of the abiding Cross. It towers above the wrecks of time. If that had gone all had gone. We could never have replaced the Cross. We can

build new homes, but never a new Cross. If the Savior had perished, all had perished. "If it were not for this vision of Him," says the author of the book, "how I should have wept when I saw the wounded men come back in such numbers!"

The old world lies in ruins at our feet but the Cross stands untouched, and we shall build our new and better civilization round the Cross.

"Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." We are not our own. We belong to Christ who bought us. That Christ is the central figure of today—the only figure that stands. By an awful process of exclusion the war is fastening attention upon the one figure that stands. Jesus was never so necessary, so unique, so sufficient; strong among the weak, erect among the fallen, victor among the defeated, living among the dead. Do we recognize Him? "The light shineth in darkness and the darkness comprehended it not." "He was in the world and the world knew Him not." "He came unto His own and His own received Him not." "Have I been so long with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?" Do we know Him? He is here and He claims us.

"Ye are not your own," are the words of the first and greatest interpreter of the gospel of the Cross. It was not an easy thing for a Jew, a scholar, a Roman citizen to admit this. "Ye are not your own," says patriotism. You belong to your country. Your American uniforms, your English and French uniforms are a mark of your country's ownership. It is a great thing to be magnificently owned. God

claims us for His own. The mark of His ownership is upon us. He can give a reason for His claim—"Ye are bought with a price." What is the price? "Who loved me, and gave Himself for me" Gal. 2:20. "Christ died for our sins" I Cor. 15: 3. "Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree" I Peter 2:24. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" I John 1: 7. No wonder Paul said, "I am debtor." On the way to Damascus he had met the Crucified. There he had come face to face with the Hero of Calvary. After he had once seen the Cross of Christ all other crosses were small. From that hour he became the bond slave of Jesus Christ. Never afterward did he count himself his own.

Every privilege we enjoy has been bought with a price. Some do not like blood theology but it is the price. Some do not like Calvary but it is the price. There is a story of a man—a Scotchman—who kissed his father's hand—a hand scarred by sacrifice and hard service. I wish you would kiss the hand of Christ that was pierced for you. I wish I could take your hand today and place it in His scarred hand. That hand represents the price He has paid for you. Do not push it away; do not be ashamed of it. This is what the Cross stands for—the price for which He has redeemed you unto Himself.

But the Cross stands for something more. It stands to call us into fellowship with the sufferings of Him who hung upon it. It calls us to be living witnesses

to its power. "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." We cannot add to His essential glory but we can be the instruments through which His glory is made known to the world. Personal testimony is Christ's declared method of propagating His gospel. It was to make effective witnesses that the Holy Spirit was given. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me." In church life today not one person in ten is giving any effective testimony and yet the church was bought with a price. As a rule people would come to church on Sunday if they had been at work for Him during the week. They are not witnessing and their inactivity makes them careless about Bible study, prayer, church attendance, manner of life. If one is going to be a forceful witness for Christ he must be conscious of what Christ is doing in and for him now.

A Christian minister, who was drifting from the message of the Cross, tells how late one stormy night there was a knock at his door. On opening it there stood a child, thin and poorly clad, who said, timidly, "Sir, my mother wants you to come and get her in. She is dying and wants you to come and get her in." The man put on his hat and coat and went out with the shivering child into the night. Through dark alleys they passed and finally came to an old building where they went up a rickety flight of stairs and entered a miserable room. By the dim light he saw, over in the corner, a woman lying on a pile of rags.

He sat down by her and tried to talk to her. He gave her extracts from his sermons, he gave her other beautiful thoughts, but they all were unavailing. At last he told her of the "fountain filled with blood" and that there was power in it to cleanse her sins and make her fit to meet God. She could understand that story. She accepted it and found peace. He had "got her in," and, adds the minister, "That night I got myself in, too."

It is the old story of the Cross that this broken world needs to heal its old heartache and form a foundation upon which to build its new hopes. Unless we give this to the world we give them nothing that will satisfy, nothing that will endure. A young soldier just leaving for the battle front, was invited with others of his comrades, to a social affair held in their honor. They were amused and entertained, they were feasted and flattered, "But I wish they had given us something for our souls," he said, as he went away. "We are going out to die and I wish they had given us something for our souls." That is what our shattered world needs today—something for its soul.

The only adequate preparation for the new and supreme opportunity after the war is a fresh study of the life and teachings of Christ: *We must neither twist His words nor water down His teachings.* We must obey Him as a private obeys his captain. The church must be more like Christ. Our faith must not be a last resort but the very dynamic of our beings. Humanitarianism, social service, secular education will

not suffice. Mere numbers, prayerless giving will not suffice. The deepest need is not for any material or external thing but for a vitality in the church equal to its task. The need is for able witnesses to the fact that the Cross is the one and only remedy for the evils of our world.

"Therefore if any man be *In Christ,* he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

II Corinthians 5:17.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male or female: for ye are all one *In Christ Jesus.*"

Galatians 3:28.

"IN CHRIST"

Extract from address by Miss Blinn.

READ again the epistles of Paul and see how the words, "in Christ," sum up the great gospel that he preached.

"In Christ." All that God is, is in Christ; all that man is, is in Christ. The one possible meeting place in all the universe between God and man is a meeting place under the mystery of the incarnation, and in the atonement. He removes the curse of sin; He lays the burden of our sin upon His own body and bears it upon the cross. He was wounded for our transgressions; the punishment of our sin was upon Him, and with His stripes we were healed. As He finished pouring out His life for men who were guilty while He himself remained sinless, He cried: "It is finished," and as the cry breathed itself out, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom so that the holy place became clear to men, and that one meeting place between God and man in the old tabernacle was transferred forever to the cross in the rent veil of His flesh.

"In Christ" is the only meeting place between man and man in all this universe. Moral conviction is the greatest police force in the world. Millions of policemen will not make people do right, without moral

conviction. They told us five years ago that war was forever impossible *because humanity had come to realize it was a great brotherhood.* They told us that war, famine, and pestilence were forever impossible *for the brotherhood of man* had so permeated science that science had destroyed famine. But five years have revealed to us the broken stick of human brotherhood. It has been unable to bear its burden alone. War has ridden its rough steed through the whole world, and famine and pestilence have done their work.

"In Christ" labor and capital can come together. The signing of a peace treaty will not take out of the heart of the average man the willingness to make gain of his employee. Where will labor get a fair deal? Where will capital find a heart of humanity? "In Christ."

"In Christ" all races can meet. East and west cannot meet in absolute guaranty of peace and unity save in Christ. No power in man anywhere on God's globe can break down distinctive fundamental race differences and antagonisms. Christ alone takes away differences and brings men into one family in one new birth.

"The King's daughter is all glorious within."

Psalms 45:13

FAVORITE POEMS OF VERA BLINN.

THE WORKER'S PRAYER.

Prepare us, Lord, for this great work of thine
By thine own process; we know not the way
To fit ourselves; we only grope; the day
Is thine; its light, a ray from thee divine,
Illumines the path where thou wouldst have it shine;
And in thy Light our own poor struggling ray
Gets new encouragement until we say,
With longing hearts, "Thy will be done, not mine."
Then we are ready; then thou wilt use our powers
To spread thy Kingdom and build up thy cause;
And thou wilt make our consecrated hours
Our sunniest; nor will the world's applause
Affect our service, for we look to thee
For all we have and all we hope to be.

Used by Vera Blinn in Evangel

Straight through my heart this fact today,
By truth's own hand is driven,
God never takes one thing away,
But something else is given.

I did not know in earlier years
This law of love and kindness;
I only mourned, through bitter tears,
My loss in sorrow's blindness.

But ever following each regret
O'er some departed treasure,
My sad, repining heart was met
With unexpected pleasure.

I thought it only happened so,
But Time this truth has taught me,
No least thing from my life can go,
But something else is brought me.

It is the law, complete, sublime,
And now with faith unshaken,
In patience, I but bide my time,
When any joy is taken.

No matter if the crushing blow
May for the moment down me,
Still back of it waits Love, I know,
With some new gift to crown me.

From Vera Blinn's Note Book

HE IS COUNTING ON YOU

"He is counting on you,"
On your silver and gold,
On that treasure you hold;
On that treasure still kept,
Though the doubt o'er you swept.
"Is this gold not all mine?"
(Lord, I knew it was thine.)
He is counting on you,
If you fail him—what then?

"He is counting on you,"
On a love that will share
In his burden of prayer
For the soul he has bought
With his life blood; and sought,
Through his sorrows and pain,
To win "Home" once again.
He is counting on you,
If you fail him—what then?

"He is counting on you,"
On life, money, and prayer;
And "the day shall declare"
If you let him have all
In response to his call;
Or if he in that day,
To your sorrow must say,
"I have counted on you,
But you failed me."—What then?

"He is counting on you,"
Oh, the wonder and grace,
To look Christ in the face,
And not be ashamed.
For you gave what he claimed,
And you laid down your all
For his sake—at his call.
For he had counted on you,
And you failed not.—What then?

Used by Vera Blinn in Evangel

THE LEAST OF THESE

Dago, and Sheeny, and Chink;
Greaser, and Nigger, and Jap;
The devil invented these terms, I think,
To hurl at each hopeful chap
Who comes so far over the foam
To this land of his heart's desire,
To rear his brood, to build his home,
And to kindle his hearthstone fire.
While the eyes with joy are blurred,
Lo, we make the strong man sink,
And stab the soul with the hateful word,
Dago, and Sheeny, and Chink.

Dago, and Sheeny, and Chink;
These are the vipers that swarm
Up from the edge of perdition's brink,
To hurt and dishearten and harm.
Oh, shame, when their Roman forebears walked
Where the first of the Caesars trod;
Oh, shame, when their Hebrew father talked
With Moses, and he with God.
These swarthy sons of Japheth and Shem
Gave the goblet of Life's sweet drink
To the thirsty world, which now gives them,
Dago, and Sheeny, and Chink.

Dago, and Sheeny, and Chink;
Greaser, and Nigger, and Jap;
From none of them doth Jehovah shrink;
He lifteth them all to his lap.
And the Christ, in his kingly grace,
When their sad low sob he hears,
Puts his tender embrace around our race,
As he kisses away its tears;
Saying, "O least of these, I link
Thee to me, for whatever may hap;
Dago, and Sheeny, and Chink;
Greaser, and Nigger, and Jap."

Bishop McIntyre

OUR BEST

God wants our best; he, in the far-off ages,
Once claimed the firstlings of the flock, the finest of the wheat;
And still he asks his own, with gentlest pleading,
To lay their highest hopes and brightest talents at his feet;
He'll not forget the feeblest service, humblest love;
He only asks that of our store, we give to him the best we have.

Christ gives the best; he takes the hearts we offer,
And fills them with his glorious beauty, joy and peace,
And in his service, as we're growing stronger,
The calls to grand achievements still increase;
The richest gifts for us, on earth or in the heaven above,
Are hid in Christ. In Jesus we receive the best we have.

And is our best too much? O friends, let us remember
How once our Lord poured out his soul for us,
And in the prime of his mysterious manhood,
Gave up his precious life upon the cross.
The Lord of lords, by whom the worlds were made,
Through bitter grief and tears, gave us the best he had.

Quoted often by Vera Blinn.

A WORLD'S HEARTACHE

"The great world's heart is aching, aching, fiercely in the night,
And God alone can heal it, and God alone give light;
And the men to hear that message, and to speak the living word,
Are you and I, my brothers, and the millions that have heard.

"Can we close our eyes to duty? Can we fold our hands at ease,
While the gates of night stand open to the pathways of the seas?
Can we shut up our compassions? Can we leave our prayer unsaid
Till the lands which sin have blasted have been quickened from the dead?

"We grovel among trifles, and our spirits fret and toss,
While above us burns the vision of the Christ upon the cross;
And the blood of Christ is streaming from his broken hands and side,
And the lips of Christ are saying, 'Tell my brothers I have died.'

"O voice of God, we hear thee above the shocks of time,
Thine echoes roll around us, and the message is sublime;
No power of man shall thwart us, no stronghold shall dismay,
When God commands obedience, and love has led the way."

Used by Vera Blinn on front page of Evangel

"Thy memory, on thy Master's breast,
Uplifts us like the beckoning stars.
We follow now as thou hast led;
Baptize us, Savior, for the dead."

BX9878.8 .B6S6
The radiant life of Vera B. Blinn.
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